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Biography.

MEMOIRS OF MISS ELIZABETH HUTCHINSON, (GRAND DAUGHTER OF THE LATE EDWARD HUTCHINSON, ESQ.) WHO DIED JULY 10, 1800, NEAR BIRMINGHAM, ENG. IN THE 21ST YEAR OF HER AGE.

Compiled from a Sermon occasioned by her death, and a narrative and letters of the deceased, published by the Rev. Edward Burn, A. M.

WERE the design of the following memoirs to delineate a character of strong sense, invigorated by patient inquiry, and enriched by various, and, at her age, uncommon endowments; the life of the late Miss HUTCHINSON would furnish ample materials. But the object here aimed at is of a much higher nature. It is to show how such a character is adorned by real and distinguished piety. It is indeed to be lamented, that such a combination of excellencies should be deemed rare; but the melancholy truth is, that the age of youth is generally marked by a levity of temper and frivolity of pursuit, which tend to impress the fatal notion, that piety and weakness are synonymous terms; or, at the best, that religion is utterly inconsistent with true happiness. Indeed, the world generally account vital religion to be folly. But the young reader should remember, there is another

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er who judgeth; and that, in his estimation, "The fear of the Lord is wisdom."

It was the privilege of Miss Hutchinson to be the daughter of parents, who feared God, and who, by a large acquaintance with the enjoyments and disappointments of life, were eminently qualified to direct and assist her inquiries respecting both worlds. To the religious care of their children, their united exertions were uniformly directed; and God graciously smiled on their endeavours. Parents are here entreated to recollect, amid all their cares, that the religious instruction of their children is a primary duty. Those young people, who have unhappily undervalued or misimproved the blessing of godly instruction, should also be reminded, that Miss Hutchinson, during her long affliction, and in her dying hours, was filled with gratitude and praise to God for this singular mercy.

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She early discovered the love of knowledge, and pursued it with uncommon ardour and success. Besides a complete acquaintance with what is generally deemed necessary to an English education, she made very considerable progress in zoology and botany, and has left several specimens of her ingenuity on these subjects, which would not disgrace a master.

But she had still higher objects, which engaged her attention, and which sanctified and ennobled every inferior pursuit. At the age of *fourteen* she became hopefully pious. From that period, the extraordinary vigour and improvement of her faculties may be dated. So true it is, that real piety, far from debasing or contracting the powers of the mind, is adapted to elevate and enlarge them; instead of checking their due exertion, it calls them into action, and consecrates them to their proper use.

Her inquiries on the subject of religion were attended with peculiar earnestness of mind. Though remarkably vigilant in her attention to the ordinances of public worship, she was much in retirement; and though extensively acquainted with the works of the best modern divines, her principal books were the Bible and her own heart. Here her progress was truly astonishing. Not satisfied with an enlarged and accurate knowledge of what may be attained by our English version, she applied to the study of the Hebrew scriptures; and with such success, that, during the two last years of her life, she read the *original* of the Old Testament not only with ease, but with a de-

gree of critical discernment, that would justly be held reputable in the sacred profession. Such was her facility and delight in this holy study, that she abridged, at the age of *sixteen*, the Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon of Parkhurst; and, during the last six months of her illness, she compiled, and wrote out with her own hand, a large Grammar and Praxis of the sacred tongue, both of which were executed in a style of superior accuracy and beauty. These were presented to her parents, as tokens of filial regard.

It may be proper to remark, that these extraordinary attainments were not accompanied by any airs of affected superiority. Far from that pert loquacity, which, without regard to circumstances, obtrudes itself on all occasions, she heard in modest silence, discriminated with judgment, and treasured up whatever was valuable in the observations of others.

But the prominent feature in Miss Hutchinson's character was piety; not, indeed, that heartless and formal thing, which consists in *bodily exercise*, or in accomplishing a round of external duties; nor that superficial and showy thing, which, despising forms, spends itself in profession and words; but, that enlightened, solid, and holy principle, which humbles the heart, magnifies the Saviour, and dedicates the life to his service. Her humility was deep and habitual, and such as becomes every disciple of Jesus. She saw the refuge, which the gospel sets before us, and fled to it for safety; and this she found the sanctuary of peace.

Her views of sin were extensive and deep. Seldom, if ever,

(says Mr. Burn) have I witnessed in so young a person, and of such amiable qualities, so entire a sense of personal demerit before God. Though, in her conduct as a child, an instance of filial disobedience could scarcely be recollected, she nevertheless felt herself to be a sinner against Heaven. Her hours of retirement were spent in meditation on her apostasy from God, her unbelief, and her want of that conformity to his will, which his word requires. Appealing from human judgment, as the criterion of religious character, she directed her attention to the law of God, as the transcript of his own perfections, and the only perfect and infallible measure of the creature's obligation. The same gracious teaching, which convinced her of sin, which discovered its malignity and guilt, as a transgression of the law, brought her also to acknowledge that its sentence would be *just*, were it to be executed upon *herself*. She saw, that so far from being able to recommend herself to God by the merit of her obedience to any conditions, legal or evangelical, that "by the law no flesh can be justified in his sight;" and that she must be "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." This discipline of the law, in the hand of the Spirit, was not the result of a sudden or single impression on the mind. It had none of those characters of an enthusiastic profession, which distinguished the stony ground hearers. It was a conviction of the conscience, following the information of the understanding, and vouchsafed in the use of means; that is, in reading the

scriptures, in earnest prayer, and in an attendance on the ordinances of public worship, with a simple dependence on the promised aids of God's blessed Spirit.

The following extract from a letter, written to her mother, expresses her own views relative to her awakening and conversion.

"You give me encouragement freely to state to you the concerns of my soul, and you say, the more open and free I am, the greater satisfaction it will afford you; and therefore I shall write what first occurs. I shall begin, by telling you, the first thing which put me upon an inquiry, was hearing the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, upon man's enmity to God, which you read on Sunday evenings. No doubt you remember the dislike and opposition, which I then shewed to them. Before that time, I had no notion of my character as a *sinner*, and even *then* I was not fully convinced of it; for though unable to deny, I was yet unwilling to confess it. But the Lord was so merciful to me, that, from that time, I daily felt the burden increasing, till at last I found it was too heavy for me to bear, and that I must seek help from one that is mighty. Fisher's "*Marrow of Modern Divinity*," and Boston on the "*Covenant of Works*," were of great use to me in convincing me what a sad state I was in. O! how heavy did I then feel the curse of the law hanging upon me! I knew not what to do, nor where to flee for safety. I had no one, to whom I could open my mind, for this was at the time when you were confined. My heart was indeed overwhelmed within me, and I felt no comfort,

till the Lord, of his great mercy, set me upon the "Rock that is higher than I." A sermon, Mr. ——— preached from Is. xxvi. 1, 2, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in;" the Lord was pleased to bless to me, and it was the means of restoring peace to my troubled soul. This text also, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," was graciously applied to me. O! what a change did I then feel! My burden, like poor Christian's at the cross, seemed to fall from off my back, and I could go away rejoicing, as he did."

In the following extract she bewails her short comings in duty, and her depravity: "Alas! what do I render to the Lord for all his mercies unto me? Do I live to his glory? Do I honour his name? or rather, do I not daily dishonour him? I find, indeed, that the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do; and this it is which makes me cry out with the apostle, "O wretched creature that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" May I also say with him, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

She entertained high and animating views of Christ, and the method of salvation. In a letter to her mother, she says: "Who can describe the love of Jesus! Who can tell what he hath done

to ransom fallen, guilty man! It surpasses, far surpasses all human power even so much as to conceive of it. "He is altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand." I find my heart drawn out after him; I love, I praise, I wonder. O! that I could express what at times I feel, when enjoying his presence! "In his presence is life, and at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Jesus is my portion and my all: "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison with thee." I love him supremely; every thing else, compared with him, is less than nothing, and vanity. "As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" In him, and in him alone, will I rejoice. "My soul shall triumph in the Lord, and make her boast in the God of her salvation." It is the delightful theme of praise, which occupies the tongues of angels and redeemed spirits throughout eternity. O! I long to join with them in singing this song, which is ever new. Jesus is gone before to prepare a place for me, and when he has made it ready for me, and me for it, then will he take me home to himself, to join the church triumphant, in ascribing "praise and glory to the Lamb forevermore." Till then I would follow the church militant here on earth, and raise my voice with hers, in praising our great Redeemer."

These expressions are not to be resolved into rhapsody and passion; they are such as we ought to use respecting him, "who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" him, who loved his church, and gave himself for it;" him, to whom Miss H. felt indebted for all her salvation, and to whom she delighted, from gratitude, to ascribe all the glory. "We love him because he first loved us;" and so far are we from carrying this generous affection to excess, in our admiration of the Son of God, that our highest and best expressions of love to him fall infinitely below their adorable object; and come short even of the sense of obligation we feel to his rich mercy.

It may be conceived by some a strange thing, to speak of religion, as an inward, vital, and transforming principle. But surely it is more strange to conceive how it can benefit any one, without being so. There is no such absurdity as this in the common concerns of life. Riches, in speculation, are held of little value by those, who have them in possession; and all persons can distinguish between the reputed efficacy of a medicine, in the prescription of a physician, and its actual effect on the health of the patient. Persons may acknowledge the authority of the Bible, and express a preference for certain sentiments, without the admission of religion into their hearts. The difference between the *form* of godliness and the *power* is essential; and this important distinction turns entirely on receiving, or not receiving the religion of Christ into the heart.

The *effects* of evangelical principles were conspicuous in the conduct of Miss Hutchinson. "The tree is known by its fruits." The wisdom of this maxim is universally allowed; but, unhappily, neither the tree nor its fruit is, in general, properly discriminated. Nature is constantly confounded with grace, and the fruits of nature mistaken for those of the Spirit. If a young person be amiable, discover a decent respect for the institutions of religion, and, especially, if correct in his morals, he is, of course, with the generality, a religious and good man. We mean not to disparage amiable qualities, much less would we discourage, in youth, a reverence for the appointments of religion, or the sanctions of morality; at the same time, we admonish them to beware, how they mistake qualities, which may be purely natural, for grace; and effects, which may proceed from education and habit only, for the genuine and distinguishing fruits of the holy Spirit. The truth is, these properties, though excellent in themselves, are manifestly defective, not only in their *principle*, but in the *measure* and *motive*. The fountain of desire and of action, the heart, is corrupt before God; and the Lord, who searches the heart, declares, "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." The tree, therefore, must be made good, and the fruit will be good also. Where this change is real, the man not only becomes "a new creature," but a new character; his religious and moral deportment, though formerly correct, will now receive

and bear a new impression, arising from supernatural principles, and altogether appropriate to the man, who is "*born of God*."

Though Miss Hutchinson was called, in youth, from the stage of life, her removal was not sudden. For more than two years she lay in the furnace; but the Messenger of the covenant sat as a *refiner*. A brief account of what passed in her last hours will doubtless be acceptable to the reader.

When speaking of the deep convictions she formerly had of sin, she observed, "At that time I saw more of the danger, and felt more of the terrors of sin; but now I see more of its exceeding sinfulness." At different times, she addressed the servants in a very suitable and impressive manner; telling them, "she had no dependence on any thing she had done, but that the ground of her hope was Christ, who had done all things for her," and repeatedly expressed her great love to him on that account. A short time before her departure, on being told, "You are very poorly," she said, "I am quite willing, quite ready; for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep what I have committed to him against that day." When asked by the minister, who attended her, "Is there any subject, or view of truth, which, in your present circumstances, particularly impresses your mind, and which you would wish me to recommend to the congregation?" She answered, after a short pause, with inexpressible composure, "the faithfulness of God;" and, immediately after he retired, she repeat-

ed the words, "Lacked ye any thing?" adding, with ineffable sweetness of countenance, "Nothing! Nothing!" and expressing, at the same time, her wish, that, if a funeral sermon were preached, this might be the text. When speaking of a near relation, whom she wished to see, and who had been written to at her request, she said, "I should be happy to see him; but, if I do not, I shall be still happier; tell him, if I do not, that I am complete in Jesus"—often repeating with peculiar emphasis, "Complete in him!" On that passage being repeated, "Death is swallowed up in victory," she instantly continued, in the exulting strain of the apostle; "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!" After recovering from fainting, she seemed disappointed, and observed, "that her sight and hearing having failed her, she expected to have seen the gates of heaven opened to receive her." After this, she arranged her concerns for this life, and spake of death, as if she had been going a journey; she even gave directions respecting her funeral. "Well," she said, "this poor body will once more go into the house of God." And after a short interval added, "I can now resign you all up, I am going to glory! Do you not wish you were going with me? Well, we shall all shortly meet again! Jesus is the hope of glory!" So strong was her desire to depart, and to be with Christ, that, on reviving a little, she said, with tears, "I feel much better; this has been the greatest trial I have had! I begin to think of

coming back again!" And, a short time after, "If I desire to live, it is to tell what the Lord hath done for my soul! I have not strength to do it now." On the same day she said, "I am very happy, indeed, and quite willing to go, or to continue in the same state." Afraid of losing this sweet composure of mind, she several times repeated that verse of Mr. Cowper:

"But ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway;
Else the next cloud, that veils my skies,
Drives all these thoughts away."

But a faithful God was better to her than her fears. Not that she was a stranger to those trying exercises, which arise from the absence of sensible enjoyment, and which are more or less common to the people of God. Even in this awful season she said, "I walk in darkness, I have no light; but my stay is on my God! I have no sensible comforts; but what are comforts! they are not the ground of my hope." The feeble hearted may learn from this, that their temptation is no "strange thing;" and they will

see, from the sequel, that "God is faithful, who will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able;" for her soul was afterwards filled with such manifestations of divine love, that her mortal strength could scarcely sustain the impression. She said, in the midst of this, "I am not in extacies, but I cannot express how happy I am. This is no new thing. I know not what the joys of heaven may be, but this body can scarcely sustain what I now feel!" Repeating those beautiful lines of Dr. Watts;

"A mortal paleness on my cheek,
But glory in my soul!"

When her brother arrived, she was very happy, and expressed her readiness and desire to depart. "Now," said she, "I have taken leave of all, I have nothing to do but to die!" Just before she died she said, with composure, "I am going!" and on its being observed to her, "You are going to glory," she replied, with a faltering voice, "Yes; I am going to glory! I love my Jesus! I love my Jesus!"

Religious Communications.

SERIOUS THOUGHTS ADDRESSED TO THE AGED.

IN passing through this probationary state, many are the changes, and numerous the trials, which fall to the lot of men. Being mere sojourners on the earth, they are not long seen in any one situation. Their morning sun rises, it quickly reaches its meridian, and, if the span of life be lengthened out, soon gives place

to the protruding shades of night. In youth, their worldly prospects are commonly *brightening*; in old age, they are daily *diminishing*. In every period, and under every condition of life, the supports and consolation derived from religion are necessary; but, never more so, than when "the evil days" of old age come on, when the sun,

the moon and the stars are darkened, when the clouds return after the rain, when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, when the grasshopper becomes a burden, and desire fails. Comparing the vigour and sprightliness of youth with the infirmities and decrepitude of old age, the *latter* appears to be a *gloomy period*. But there is a path plainly marked out in the word of God, which, if it has been entered on and pursued, not only counterbalances all the evils and burdens attendant on old age, but renders that period, in many respects, the most honourable of any part of human life. Alluding to this path, and the happy consequences of walking in it, the wise king of Israel, guided by the inspiration of the holy Spirit, observed, *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

To make this paper the more interesting and instructive to that class of readers for whom it is especially designed, it may be pertinent to notice certain appearances in aged persons, which never fail to render the evening of their days, with all their infirmities, honourable, quiet and happy.

1. When this is the case, they are found *fearing God*.

It is recorded in the scriptures of truth, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Of no person, whether old or young, learned or unlearned, can it be said, that he is wise, in the *scripture sense*, who does not possess this fear. All men have, by nature, hearts which are "enmity against God," and which are "not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." To *begin* to fear and love God, therefore, is the

same thing as to become a new creature, or to be born of the holy Spirit. When aged persons are found in the way of righteousness, they are found *in Christ*, who, by his Spirit, has renewed their hearts, and inclined them to walk with God on the earth. Many, doubtless, who are far advanced in life, and whose probationary state is drawing to a close, are total strangers to the true knowledge of God, and, though they may have been loaded with worldly honours, have all their days been walking the downward road. Nothing short of true religion, that religion which is the fruit of a *regenerated heart*, and which consists essentially in *self-denial*, will distinguish the hoary head from the wicked in general; because there is nothing, short of this, which will translate one of the fallen race of Adam from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ. True religion is the lowest condition on which a standing in the family of the Redeemer, and the hope of a peaceful departure from the world, can be maintained. This the aged must possess, or they will be strangers to every degree of that support, which they will need, when they see all their worldly prospects contracting.

2. Aged persons, in order to possess that hope, which is an "anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil," must not be *novices* in *experimental religion*.

Of those of our fallen race, who belong to the kingdom of Christ, much the greatest part were called into that kingdom in their youthful days. They were called, and justified, and sanctified,

that, being early in the school of Christ, they might be fitted for the work they had to do on earth, and be "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Few, it is believed, *begin* the great work of preparing for eternity, in old age, after they have spent, in sin, almost the whole of their state of probation. The remark has often been made, and, probably, it is founded in truth, that the characters of men are generally formed and fixed for eternity, before they have passed the *meridian* of their days.

Although they, who turn unto the Lord and engage in his service, at the eleventh hour, will, through sovereign mercy, be accepted; yet they will go out of the world, with little experience in the things of religion. Their knowledge of God and of themselves will be very small; and the righteous Judge, who will reward men according to their deeds, will discriminate between them, and those who long denied themselves to build up his kingdom and to promote his glory. Christian knowledge is usually the result of long and diligent attention to the things of religion. Regeneration, or the implantation of grace in the heart, is an *instantaneous change*; but sanctification, or growth in Christian knowledge and experience, is a *work of time*. It is not effected at once, any more than the infant child grows instantly to a state of maturity and manhood. In that divine command recorded in the sacred volume, *give diligence to make your calling and election sure*, it is necessarily implied, that Christians, in order to attain to any *eminence* in religion, must

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make it their first and greatest concern. They must early enter the school of Christ, and be faithful in it.

Aged persons will appear to be *novices* in that knowledge, which is so desirable and important in the near prospect of eternity, if the morning and meridian of their days were spent in sin, and if they did not turn unto the Lord until their natural powers began to fail, under the weight of years. How could it be otherwise with them? How could they expect to have much knowledge of God or of themselves, with little pains and short experience? The present is a world of correction and discipline. In various ways, God is presenting to all, seasonable and important instruction; and they who are *wise* are gaining knowledge, under their advantages. Do the aged appear in character, or as they ought to appear, if, compared with Christians in general, they are mere *babes* in *experimental religion*? This, in ordinary cases, must evince, that they were either very *late* in their attention to the great business of life, or that they have attended to it with *criminal indifference*. But, when we see hoary heads eminent in Christian experience, eminent in prayer, and mighty in the scriptures, being "spiritual men of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil," we may know it is the result of having been long in the service of Christ, and of having been, in some good measure, faithful to God and to their own souls. It is pleasing to see those, who are old in years, well versed in the knowledge of divine things, and appearing not to have just

begun, but to have made great advances, in the Christian race. When they can converse understandingly on the character of God, on the depravity and treachery of the heart, and on the nature of the Christian warfare, they give evidence of having profited, by living *long* in this world, and of their ripening for the grave and for heaven.

3. The aged, in order to appear with honour in their standing, must be *sound in faith*.

An old person, though he may exhibit some evidence of real religion, does not appear to advantage—he does not reflect honour on Christ, nor on himself, if he be a novice in the *doctrines of the gospel*. On the contrary, he exhibits melancholy proof of his great neglect of God's word. The apostle Paul, among many other directions, charged Titus to “speak the things which become sound doctrine; that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, *sound in faith*.” A knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel is not gained, by the study of a few hours or a few days, but is the fruit of a long and careful attention to the Bible, which is the fountain of light. To have a clear view of the scheme of salvation, revealed in the holy scriptures, is a great attainment. Considering the long opportunities for instruction, enjoyed by the aged, especially such as have lived under the light of the gospel, we have reason to look for *this* attainment in *them*. They ought to give proof, that they are thoroughly acquainted with the sacred volume, that they have thought and conversed much on religion, and that the leading and essential doctrines of

the gospel are familiar to their minds. Indecision, with respect to the doctrines of grace, is not honourable in old men. It neither becomes their hoary heads, nor does it comport with their near approach to the eternal world.

4. The aged appear honourable, when the *families* they have trained up are *well instructed in the things of religion*.

Children, generally, exhibit evidence of the manner in which they have been educated by their parents. Such parents as walk in the fear of the Lord, and maintain consistency of character before their houses, make deep impressions on the minds of their children. This will be especially true, in those cases where parents possessed religion, while their children were young. If they have observed religious order in their houses, and conducted so as to adorn their Christian profession, their children, *generally*, to say the least, are inclined to treat religion, and religious institutions, with outward respect. This will appear when parents are old, and even after they have gone the way of all the earth. The hearts of some parents are frequently filled with grief, that their children are disposed to treat them with no more respect, and that they can have no more influence over them. Perhaps after all, they themselves, by their own unfaithfulness, and by their unwise treatment of their children, have laid the foundation for this grief. They are not respected by their children, because they have never respected themselves, in the view of their children. Far would the writer of these

thoughts be from intimating, that it is in the power of parents to effect, in their children, a saving change. This is the work of God. Notwithstanding this, by consistency of conduct, and by persevering in it, they may gain a surprising and happy influence over them. How pleasing and interesting is the account, which the scriptures give us, of Joseph's going with his children to his father Jacob for a blessing! That transaction may be considered as witnessing for the pious patriarch, that his hoary head was found in the way of righteousness. Joseph would not have taken such a step, if he had not believed, that his venerable father walked with God.

It is an honour to grow old, and wear out, in the service of Christ. If, therefore, we may charitably believe, that an aged person has long been running the Christian race; that his infirmities have not come upon him, in consequence of the indulgence of sinful appetites, but in the service of God, his grey hairs, his trembling limbs, and his faltering voice, at once demand our reverence and respect. The most abandoned persons can hardly refrain from rising up, and calling him blessed. On the other hand, what spectacle, in this world, can be more affecting than an old man, whose "bones are full of the sins of his youth," whose infirmities have been hastened and increased by his irregular life; whose prayers and blessing are never sought by his children and posterity; whose heart has become callous under the instructions of the gospel, and the warning dispensations of providence; who has neglected

the great and important business of life, until his sun is seen to be almost setting! Who can seriously reflect on the prospects of such a person, and refrain from tears? How miserably he has spent the precious moments of his life! moments which can never be recalled! He is on the verge of the eternal world, and yet unprepared to meet his God: Let the aged, who may have opportunity, seriously weigh these thoughts; and may "the Lord give them understanding in all things." H.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

In a Series of Letters to a Friend.

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LETTER V.

Objections to the Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement considered.

DEAR SIR,

It is objected, "that the commutation of iniquity and holiness between Christ and believers, which those, *"reputed orthodox,"* maintain, is subversive of all rational ideas of divine justice." But this is only a strong assertion without proof. No other kind of commutation is contended for than that, which, by the consent of the parties concerned, transfers, not the acts or the merits of righteousness and sin, but the rights or burdens annexed to each respectively; or than that, which takes place between a debtor and his sponsor; which is thought not inconsistent with rational ideas of justice. But to inflict the curse of the law, and give the wages of sin to Christ, when it is supposed not to be due for any sin in him, or imputed to

him; and to justify one who is personally unrighteous, and has no righteousness imputed, seems indeed subversive of rational ideas of justice, and inconsistent with the character of a righteous Judge.

It is further objected, that "the imputation of Christ's righteousness to a believer would effectually exclude, after the gift of faith, all possibility of farther grace to the children of men."

I answer. 1. God's bestowing on us blessings to which he has freely given us a title, is as much an act of grace, as if we had no previous title to them. Free grace is the source and foundation of all gospel blessings, which we receive through the mediation of Christ.

2. The imputed righteousness of Christ entitles the believer to the promise of eternal life. If we had a perfect inherent righteousness, we could have no title to eternal life *otherwise, than by a divine promise*. Now eternal life and the blessings of the covenant of grace are *promised* to believers, as all allow. But whether these promises be made to them, as clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ, or not; it is certain, that God, according to his sovereign will, bestows his grace and blessings more on some, than on others, who are equally interested in Christ and in the promises of salvation. He exercises his free and sovereign grace in granting to some believers much greater outward favours and privileges, greater measures of the gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, than he grants to others; and their glory, honour, and happiness in heaven will be distinguishingly great. These

special favours were indeed obtained by the merits of Christ: but they are *farther acts or gifts of grace after the gift of faith*, and such as are not promised or vouchsafed to all alike. The promises will be fulfilled to all, who are interested in the righteousness of Christ. But God grants unpromised favours to some of them, in distinction from others. He has a right to dispense the blessings of his grace, in what manner and measure he pleases.

It is farther argued, "if sinners have a sinless righteousness, which is *properly their own*, they would have no sins to confess and be forgiven. The confession or forgiveness of one, to whom no sin can be justly imputed, seems a contradiction."

Answer. They who have a sinless righteousness imputed to them, to entitle them to justification, or the rights and privileges of the righteous, are yet *in themselves* sinful. The sin is not imputed to them to condemnation, for there is no condemnation to them, who are in Christ; yet pardoned sins are sins as hateful as any, and imputed righteousness is not infused into the person, who is justified by it. While sin dwells in us, we ought to be humbly sensible, that we are sinners, to acknowledge it, ask forgiveness, to hate our sins, and turn from them. If it is the duty of all men, to love God and keep his commandments; then it is the duty of all, who have sin in them, to hate their sins, and turn from them to God, and to a right temper and practice. Their being pardoned and sanctified would not release them from the duties of repent-

ance, but rather lay them under stronger obligations to them.

But though the righteousness of Christ, imputed to a believer, gives him as good a plea for acquittance and justification in the court of the Supreme Judge, as a perfect personal righteousness would have given; yet it is to be carefully remembered, that, according to the gospel constitution, *none, to whom the gospel is sent, are savingly united to Christ, or have an interest in his imputed righteousness, but penitent believers.* Accordingly, perseverance in repentance and faith, continuance in the word of Christ, as his true disciples, begging forgiveness for his sake, and keeping his commandments, are necessary to our abiding in him. We cannot continue in a justified state, unless we continue *penitent* believers, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Though no inherent qualifications in us are to be regarded, as our justifying righteousness, since it is only by the righteousness of Christ, that we are justified; yet without inherent holiness we cannot be pardoned, justified, and saved through his redemption.

It is farther argued; "if believers had a righteousness properly their own, they would neither deserve, nor receive any real punishments."

I answer. If God's giving them an interest in the righteousness of Christ renders it *their own*, then this righteousness, though not of their own working, is *so their own*, as to entitle them to the rights and privileges of righteous persons. Nor are they liable to *vindictive pun-*

ishments, from which Christ hath redeemed them, though they deserve and receive corrective punishments for their violations of God's gracious covenant. But these are not inflicted, to satisfy the justice and the law of God; for they are justified, and their sins are not imputed to them, as subjecting them to the curse. But they are inflicted, as salutary chastisements, designed for their good. They are inflicted by God, not as the *just Judge* in vindictive justice; but as the *discipline of a wise father*, who, while he visits them with the rod, takes not his loving kindness from them. Though these visitations are an evidence, that their inherent righteousness is not perfect; yet they are no proof, that they have not an interest in the perfect righteousness of Christ.

But it may be asked, "What more ample security of our salvation can be desired, than the goodness and promise of God? Why should we want to have our title to salvation supported by his justice, on the ground of a full and perfect, though imputed righteousness?"

I answer. There is no firmer title, than a divine promise gives; and they, who are so selfish, as to desire only to be satisfied that they shall be saved, would be as willing to be justified without a righteousness, as with it; that is, *justified unjustly.* But they, who have a regard for the honour of God, *as a just Judge*, will not be satisfied with that doctrine, which represents God, as justifying those, who are not righteous, and have no righteousness imputed to them. They like that doctrine better, which teaches that righteousness is imputed to believers,

as the ground of their justification, since they cannot be justified by their own righteousness; that the justice as well as grace of God, is declared in the forgiveness of sins, through the redemption of Christ, and that he is just in justifying believers. And that they, who trust in imputed righteousness, are saved by grace, and have as strong reasons for walking humbly with God, as they could have, if they were saved in any other way, is what we confidently affirm.

Another objection is to this effect. "If Christ has fulfilled the law in our stead, and if his active and passive obedience is imputed to us; then we are not bound to obey the commands of God. It would be unreasonable to exact a debt of any one after his surety has satisfied it."

Answer. It is granted, that we are not required to keep the law for the same end, for which Christ satisfied the law for us; that is, to work out a righteousness, by which we are to be justified. But it is impossible for a moral creature to be freed from his obligation to obey the laws of God. This can never cease to be his duty so long as he is God's creature, and so long as God is worthy to be loved and obeyed, and so long as his commands are holy, just, and good. We must have respect to all God's commands, though we expect not that this is to be our justifying righteousness. For this is no less our duty, than if we were probationers for life and happiness under a covenant of works. We must obey the commands of God from motives, and for ends,

proper for those, who are under the covenant of grace. In this way our subjection, love, and gratitude to God must be exercised and expressed, for the glorious perfections of his nature, particularly for his goodness and grace to the children of men, and because it is only in this way, that we can obtain the possession of the blessings, purchased for us by Christ, and promised in the gospel. It is only in the way of faith, repentance, and obedience to the commands of Christ, that our union to him is maintained, and we are qualified to enjoy the blessings, to which believers are entitled by their interest in the righteousness of Christ. Though we are justified wholly by his merits; yet sincere obedience is as much our duty, and as necessary to salvation according to the covenant of grace, as perfect obedience according to the covenant of works.

It is also objected, "that an obligation to punishment is not to be put on a footing with a pecuniary debt."

Answer. Our sins are in scripture termed debts. If they are so termed in a figurative sense, yet this is of no weight, as an objection to the doctrine of Christ's satisfying our penal debt, by bearing the guilt and punishment of our sins. The chief differences between a pecuniary and a penal debt, I think, are the following. The payment of the one is an act of commutative justice; the punishment of the other is distributive justice. A pecuniary debt is commonly for value received; a penal debt arises from crimes committed.

The one is discharged by the payment of the sum owed ; the other is satisfied for by suffering the deserved punishment. The one is ordinarily exacted by the creditor, as his *private right* ; the other is executed *pursuant to the sentence of the judge, as the minister of public justice*, whose office is to maintain the authority of the laws, to make the law the rule of his judgment without respect to persons, to maintain the public rights, and revenge the infraction of them, on behalf of the public. A pecuniary debt may be forgiven by the creditor without satisfaction ; but a just judge, in his judicial capacity, may not clear the guilty. But a pecuniary and a penal debt may both be transferred to a sponsor. Though the crime and desert of punishment cannot be separated from the criminal, and transfused into an innocent person ; yet the penal debt, the guilt, and punishment may be taken upon himself by a sponsor. But, when a pecuniary debt is paid by a sponsor, the debtor is not favoured by the creditor, in his discharge from his obligation. But, though the justice of God, as the supreme Judge of the world, his infinite hatred of sin, the threatening of his law, and the fitness and necessity of his manifesting his truth and justice in the punishment of sin, for his own honour and the public good ; though these considerations required that our sins be not forgiven, without such satisfaction, as would answer the ends, for which the punishment of sin is necessary ; yet we are under infinite obligations to God for his grace

and mercy, in providing a sponsor for us, to make satisfaction to justice, and in giving us an interest in his righteousness, and in justifying us freely of his grace through the redemption, that is in him.

I shall add one more remark. Though the punishment of sin and the sufferings of Christ have been commonly termed *satisfaction* for sin ; yet we are not to conceive of this, as a compensation to God for the good he has bestowed upon us. Neither our obedience, nor punishment is profitable to him. He does not delight in the misery of any creature for its own sake ; but only when it is necessary for holy and good ends. Nor is our obligation to love and obey God, or to suffer punishment for our sins merely because we have received good from him, (though our obligations on this account are great) but it is chiefly, because he is worthy to be loved and obeyed for what he is in himself, as well as for the abundant communications of his goodness to his creatures.

Thus, Sir, I have communicated to you some thoughts on this important subject. I have endeavoured to express my ideas intelligibly. With what success this has been accomplished, you will judge ; as also whether there be weight, pertinency, and justness in these remarks. Such as they are, please to accept them, as an honest, however feeble attempt to defend the faith, delivered to the saints ; and as a token of the respect and affection of your friend.

A Christian of the Ancient School.

LETTERS FROM A CLERGYMAN
TO HIS SON.

LETTER II.

Dear Francis,

IN answer to your question "How a man may pursue his secular business with success, and still maintain the power of religion," I have advised you to commit all your works to God, and thus make your secular business a part of religion. While you conduct in this manner, you will have a plain practical rule, by which you may judge concerning your duty, in cases where a deceitful heart will pretend doubts and contrive evasions.

There are certain works, which you wish to do, and which you hope you may do without incurring guilt. Now put this question seriously to your conscience, "Can I commit these works to God?" If you cannot do this without manifest impiety, then you must know, that the works are sinful.

In all our just and important undertakings, we may with propriety, and we ought in duty, to seek the direction of God's counsel, the assistance of his grace, and the concurrence of his blessing. The religious husbandman asks God's smiles on his daily labours. The pious traveller in all his ways acknowledges God's directing and preserving providence. The good Christian implores God's blessing on his common meals. In times of apparent danger to his person or substance he solicits the divine protection. In any case where our design is good, and the means to be used are just, we feel no scruple in addressing our-

selves to God ; yea, we think we ought to do it.

Now if you feel any doubt concerning the lawfulness of a work in contemplation, ask whether it would be pious, or proper to commend it to God? Or if you knew a neighbour, who often begun such a work with a prayer for God's blessing, ask, what you would think of him? Would you view him as eminently devout, or as adding profaneness to iniquity? If you would be afraid to pray for God's blessing on the work in question ; or would condemn as impious the man who should presume to commit such a work to God in prayer, you may conclude it to be abominable.

Guided by this rule, you never will use any artifice, deception, or fraud in the prosecution of your worldly designs ; for no man can seriously commend such means to the blessing of God. This rule will exclude *gaming* from the list of lawful works. Whatever opinion some may have of gaming, considered as an *amusement*, no man would dare to pray, that he might find it a profitable trade to get money. That sense of piety which prompts a man to pray for success in his husbandry or commerce, would make him afraid to offer a prayer for success, when he and his neighbour had agreed to put their property to the hazard of a game. He would feel, in such a case, as if prayer were an insult to his Maker. He would shudder at the thought of it. If he knew a brother gamester, who usually sought God's blessing at a card-table, as the Christian does at a dining table, he would think him abandoned to impiety. He would

applaud himself, that, though he practised gaming, he never prostituted piety in the business. But if the business itself be innocent, why may not prayer accompany this, as well as any other innocent business?

This rule will shew you what *diversions* you may admit without prejudice to religion in your heart. I will not deny, but that some amusements may be useful. Such as are, in their nature, innocent, and in their use, subservient to health of body, cheerfulness of mind, sociability of temper, and the improvement of friendship, the Christian doubtless may admit, at proper seasons, and within reasonable bounds. In such recreations you may as properly seek God's direction and blessing, as in reading an instructive book, or in sitting down at a festival table. But if the diversion to which you are invited, or which you have proposed, be of such a nature, or attended with such circumstances, that it would appear impious to implore God's guidance and blessing, it is certain, that you ought to forbear the use of it.

Farther. If realizing the truth and importance of religion, you should adopt means to spread the knowledge and promote the practice of it among others—among the youth, or among people who have not the ordinary means of instruction, you would not fail to commit your endeavours to the divine blessing. But who would venture to pray for success in his endeavours to propagate infidelity and impiety? There are those profane and impious creatures, who treat the scriptures with contempt, and labour to cor-

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rupt the minds of others from the belief of them by cavilling against them in company, and by reading and recommending books written with a design to discredit their authority, and defeat their influence. These persons pretend to believe that there is a God, on whom all creatures are dependent. But could they seriously address the Deity for his gracious smiles on their endeavours? Could they apply to him in prayer for the success of the means, which they are using to subvert revelation? Could they supplicate his blessing to accompany their labours? Certainly they would not venture on so awful a step. But why? If they believed the scriptures to be false and dangerous, they might as consistently pray for their subversion, as the Christian, who believes them to be true and important, can pray for their credit and influence. The truth is, the infidel, while he opposes the gospel, feels an inward suspicion, that he is opposing the word of God. And while he retains any impression of his own accountability, he dares not invoke his Maker to prosper his guilty conduct.

Make it a rule to commit your works to God in humble prayer, and you will not hesitate long, what works you may do. Your own conscience will remonstrate against a prayer for the divine blessing on sinful works. You will not presume to implore his smiles on works, which he condemns. Do nothing, but what you can seriously introduce into a prayer, and make the matter of a petition to God. You will then seldom venture on any criminal design, or on any sinful

means to accomplish an innocent design. Peruse and apply this advice from

Your affectionate parent,
EUSEBIUS.

INTERESTING QUERIES.

Is it an act of Christian and ministerial fellowship to sit in council with the delegates and pastors of churches? Or in other words: Does a minister, when he sits in council, especially in an ordaining council, by such act acknowledge all who sit with him, as pastors, in the council, to be ministers of the gospel, and fellow labourers in the kingdom of Christ?

If this be answered in the affirmative; it is then asked: How can a minister, who believes the doctrines of grace, and considers them essential to the gospel scheme of salvation, sit in council with those ministers who deny them?

These queries are stated with a hope, that some scribe, who is well instructed, will give that attention to them, which their practical importance demands, and kindly instruct those, who often know not what to do.

TIMOTHY.

ANSWER.

When we sit in council, be it an ordaining or other council, we acknowledge all the ministers, who sit with us, to be in good ecclesiastical standing; i. e. to have been duly inducted into office, and not to be now in a state of deposition, or under censure; and we acknowledge the delegates to be messengers of the churches of our common

Lord. Thus far, and no farther, as I conceive, we declare our fellowship with them. We do not by this act express any opinion relative to their grace, or their orthodoxy. If the ministers are visibly in good standing, have been regularly introduced into their office, and have not been regularly ejected from it, we are to treat them as officers in the church, whatever may be our private opinion concerning their personal character or qualifications. Our Saviour had communion with the Jewish church, though there were in it many things which he condemned. While the pharisean Scribes sat in Moses' seat, he directed the people to attend on their instructions, and observe them, as far as they were agreeable to the law of Moses; but cautioned them to avoid the errors taught, and the sins practised by these teachers.

In the kingdom of Christ, "all things are to be done decently and in order." There must be a visible decency, an external order in the church, that peace may be preserved, edification promoted, and confusion prevented.

When a man offers himself as a *candidate* for the ministerial office, it is incumbent on him to exhibit positive proofs of his qualifications. But before a *minister* can be justly deposed from office, there must be adduced full and indubitable evidence of his *disqualifications*. The *candidate* must have a "good report;" and if there arise an ill report, he must disprove and remove it, before he is ordained. But Paul says, "Against an *Elder*," one already in office, "receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

The officer is not to be *deposed*, or *treated* as deposed, on mere "report." There must first be an open trial; an accusation sustained by competent testimony; he must have the accuser and witnesses face to face, that he may hear them, and have an opportunity to confront them. Even *written affidavits*, taken at a distance, are never to be admitted in such trials, nor indeed in any ecclesiastical trials; for the gospel requires, that the witnesses be present. Our civil courts require the same in criminal prosecutions. And church prosecutions are all criminal.

If we refuse to sit in a council, to which we are called, some reason must be assigned for this refusal; otherwise it speaks no explicit language, and may be interpreted by men's suspicions to speak any thing and every thing that is ill. If our avowed reason be, that *such a minister is present, and we cannot act with him*, then we declare, by words and actions, that this minister ought not to be owned and treated as a minister; that the whole council ought to discard him; that his people ought to withdraw from him; that all Christians ought to shun him, as an evil and dangerous man. We not only slander him before proof of guilt, but, as far as our influence can avail, we lay him under censure; and it is our intention, (if we have any consistent intention) that our conduct shall operate to this effect. But where is our authority to censure and condemn him? We were not called for this business. Where is our evidence? *Report* or rumour, is not to be received against an *elder*. Have you or I personal knowledge in

the case? *One* witness is not sufficient. Are there other witnesses? They must exhibit their testimony before a proper judicature, and in the presence of the accused, that he may hear, cross-examine and confront them. Must he defend himself on the spot? He is not prepared—his witnesses are not present; he perhaps has objections against the judges, who assume to try him; and they were called for quite different business. But perhaps, it will be said, "Here is a minister, who has openly avowed his heresy, and who is therefore condemned of himself. There is no need of other witnesses." Be it so; still Paul tells us, that even in such a case, the heretic is not to be rejected, until "after the first and second admonition."

If every man assumes to himself a power to judge, hereticate and condemn his brethren, on mere report, or on his own private opinion, or on surmise and prejudice, without a fair, open trial,* whose character is safe? whose standing is secure? where is the peace and order of the churches? where is the liberty with which Christ has made us free? "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace in all churches of the saints."

We may know a minister, whom we think immoral in practice, or unsound in faith. Such a minister we should endeavour to reclaim by private expostula-

* We regret that no ecclesiastical tribunal exists in our Congregational churches, before which such a trial may be had. We hope the wisdom of the ministers and churches will be employed to supply this great defect in our ecclesiastical discipline.

tion. If we fail of success, we may desire some proper persons, who know the case, to assist our addresses. We are to exercise meekness, patience and candour. And before we attempt, by any action of ours, to impress a stigma upon him, I should suppose, we ought to institute a regular process against him, before some proper tribunal, that if he is innocent, he may be acquitted, and

our minds relieved from painful suspicion; and if he is guilty, and obstinate in his crimes or errors, his folly may be made manifest to all men, and the churches secured from dangerous imposition.

Thus, I imagine, peace and order in churches, and purity and soundness in ministers will best be preserved.

TITUS.

Selections.

We invite the attention of our Readers to the following observations from "The Religious Monitor," a valuable periodical work, published at Edinburgh, in Scotland. The few remarks, which are of a more local nature, contain information, which will not be unacceptable to our Readers, while the general tenor and spirit of the whole, it will be readily perceived, render them seasonable and applicable to the existing state of religion in our own country.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL CONTROVERSIES AMONGST PROTESTANTS, WITH REMARKS ON THE PROGRESS OF RELIGION.

THE state of society is seldom long stationary, and Paul speaks of the course of this world: What then, it may be inquired, since the reformation, has been our progress?

I shall suggest a few hints on religion, rather with the view of calling the attention of others to this subject, than of exhausting it myself. From the reformation to the present day, the controversy between Protestants and Papists has existed; and a minute attention to the different aspects it has assumed, might serve to discriminate the religious character of the intervening ages. Another method of ascertaining our direction at least, and

perhaps somewhat of our progress also, is to attend to the successive controversies, which have arisen among Protestants themselves.

During the sixteenth century, the chief controversy among the reformers was about the habits, rites, and ceremonies. These were of themselves confessedly indifferent, and judging by the reasoning of Paul, Rom. xiv. the guilt of schism rested on the imposers. In a neighbouring church,* a violent discussion has been excited concerning their articles, whether they are Arminian or Calvinistic. It has

* The church of England.

sometimes been hinted, that the scriptures must be very obscure, since so many contradictory opinions are derived from the same source: but this controversy may shew us, that no words are so precise, as that an ingenious disputant may not attach to them a meaning different, nay, even opposite, to what they were originally intended to convey. Their expressions might not be so accurate, nor the line of distinction so minutely defined, as after the subtile disquisitions on the Arminian point; but the sentiments of the leading reformers, on the important doctrines of the gospel, were nearly the same. At a subsequent period, not only their pious bishops, but even the House of Commons, rejected the Arminian interpretation, classing it with that of the Jesuits.

Another, and perhaps more important controversy among Protestants, was concerning the form of church government. This broke out before the close of Elizabeth's reign; and was first agitated between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, and afterwards with the Independants. James had long laboured to introduce a species of Episcopacy into Scotland; and from the time of his ascending the English throne, his purpose was more avowed, and his attempts more open. The same course pursued by his son, with other concurring circumstances, produced those dreadful calamities, by which the middle of the 17th century was convulsed. One form of church government may be better adapted to promote the purposes of edification than another, as well as nearer to

the apostolical model, yet it is certainly carrying the matter by much too far, to make any one of them essentially necessary to the existence of a Christian church. God hath been pleased to bless the labours of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Independants: May we not then adopt the reasoning of Peter concerning the Gentiles, that as God appears to make little difference among these, so to insist that any one of them should, in all cases, be submitted to, would be to tempt God, and wreath a burdensome yoke around the necks of our brethren.

The Arminian controversy may be reckoned the third, by which the Protestant church was divided. Previous to the accession of James, the doctrines of predestination, and of the perseverance of the saints, had been opposed; but it was not till after the synod of Dort, that divines began to range themselves under the banners of Calvin and Arminius. James displayed a fiery zeal against the Arminian party in Holland; but at home, as they did not oppose the arbitrary measures of the court, they were highly favoured, both by himself and his son. Towards the close of the 17th century, Arminianism, somewhat modified, was supported by Barrow and by Tillotson; and without reproach, it may safely be affirmed, that during the 18th century, the sentiments of by far the greater part of the English clergy, have been at least Arminian. The topics brought under discussion in this controversy are far more important, than those formerly mentioned, and ultimately resolve themselves into

the question, Whether the glory of man's salvation ought to be ascribed only to the Creator, or, in part at least, is due to the creature?

Soon after the commencement of the Reformation, the divinity of Christ was questioned and opposed. During the 17th century, the opinions of Socinus were favoured by few in Britain. In the early part of the last century, several persons began to speculate on these points, who in general appear to have adopted the Arian hypothesis; but from the middle to the close of the century, Socinianism met with many open and avowed defenders; and its progress among the people, it was boasted, was rapid and extensive. As this controversy respects the object of worship, and the method of acceptance with God, all who are not wholly indifferent to religion must admit, that it reaches to the very foundation of vital godliness.

Lord Herbert has long been accounted the father of our English deists, and though his offspring has been exceedingly numerous, few, if any of them, have excelled him in ability, or equaled him in propriety of conduct. He did not absolutely deny the possibility, or even the existence of revelation; but overlooking man's peculiar situation as a sinner, unhappily supposed, that the light of nature could discover all that it was necessary for us to know. During the last century, a great variety of deistical publications appeared in England; and at present, it is supposed, that infidelity is pretty prevalent among the literary and philosophical part of the community,

and extensively diffused through the body of the people. One thing may with safety be affirmed; that religion has not that hold of the public mind, nor that influence over individual conduct which it once had.

From this brief review, which, though very imperfect, is, I hope, so far as it goes, just, it appears that our progress has been, from questioning things indifferent, to proceed to those of importance; from what is important, to those which are essential; till at last revelation itself is by many assailed and rejected. In every science, some first principles are necessary, on which the whole superstructure is raised. In geometry there are certain axioms on which all the reasonings are founded. If, instead of pursuing the high speculations of this science, a mathematician should exert himself to overturn the axioms, he might in this display great ingenuity, but the tendency of his labours, instead of advancing, would be to involve the whole science in uncertainty. The sacred scriptures are the foundation on which divines build their systems, and they furnish the materials of which these systems are, or ought to be composed. But, if instead of holding fast these, as our forefathers did, and of imitating their example in explaining and illustrating them, we are chiefly employed in discussions about the truth of revelation, this shews that our movements instead of progressive have been retrograde.

It is not meant that Christianity is unsupported by evidence, or that its evidence ought not to be studied; but from the language frequently used, we might be

tempted to believe, that if not absolutely to question the truth of revelation, yet to controvert its peculiar doctrines, and to treat its writers with little respect, are received by some as sure marks of the progress and improvement of theology. But does theology admit of no improvement? It certainly does; though I am afraid we are apt to be misled, by what took place at the Reformation, and by the successive theories, which have been started in moral and natural science. At the Reformation, a great and astonishing change took place in the theological systems; and we are ready to imagine, that, to carry on the progress of what the Reformers so happily commenced, it is necessary for every succeeding age to depart as widely from that which preceded it, as they did from the doctrines and practice of the Romish church. But their situation and ours is widely different. Much of the time of the first Reformers was occupied in removing the rubbish, which one age after another had heaped on religion, and in searching for its true foundation, laid in the word of God. When they obtained this, they held it fast, and so ought we; as the only way, in which progress in religion can be made, is by adhering to "the word of the Lord, which endureth forever." The theories in Moral and Natural Philosophy, which have successively been started, so far from being worthy of the imitation of theologians, are proofs of the imperfect state of these sciences. These theories generally account, or seem to account for a variety of phenomena; but not comprehending the whole, they give

place to their successors, which grasp a more extensive range, or are recommended by the ingenuity of their principles, or the elegance of their expression. Were they fixed on a solid basis, such changes would be unnecessary and hurtful. Few are now disposed to call in question the Newtonian theory, and if no such agreement is found in morals, it arises from the reluctance men have to admit the principles of scripture, and the impossibility of finding a true foundation whilst these are rejected. Truth admits not of change, and it is the glory of Christians, that it is not subject to the fluctuating fashions of society. If we have the scriptures exactly as they were left by the sacred writers, and accurate translations of these in our own language, no farther improvement is to be made upon them. Diligent study and fervent prayer must be employed in searching the word of God—its doctrines may be anew illustrated from historical fact, observation, or experience—and so far we ought to attend to the progress of society, as to bring forward scripture truth in opposition to the reigning vices and errors; and to express our sentiments in such language as may not increase the dislike, which the human heart naturally has to the holy, humbling salvation of the gospel. Still it must be remembered, that it is on us, not on revelation, that the change is to be effected; and that it is only by more clearly understanding its doctrines, by more firmly believing its promises, and by more stedfastly obeying its precepts, that we can make progress in religion, or hope to excel the ages which are

past. The scriptures are not intended to furnish us with materials for the construction of fanciful systems; they are the grand instrument employed by God in fitting men for heaven. He forms them for himself, by delivering them into the mould of the doctrine of Christ.

When once we ascertain the species of improvement of which religion admits, it will not be difficult to perceive, whether we still continue to make progress, or have long since begun to decline.

1. The number of those by whom revelation is rejected, is far greater at present, than it was at the Reformation, and for some succeeding ages. This will not be denied; and it will also be admitted, that the increase of unbelievers is a convincing proof that religion amongst us is on the decline. This increase is the more surprising, as at no period have the evidences of revelation been more clearly and ably stated; nor the cavils of its opponents more fully refuted. Still infidelity makes rapid progress. Whence is this? Without entering far on the subject, it appears to me, that a considerable share of blame rests with the defenders of revelation. In the early part of the last century, several divines, to counteract the effects of infidelity, published systems of natural religion, which, by the unacknowledged aid of scripture, they rendered tolerably complete. In this way they expected to win over their opponents; a plan just as likely to succeed, as it would be, to hope to prevail on a sick man to call a physician, by telling him that he would recover without his aid.

In later times the defences of Christianity yield up by far too much, and from this charge even the valuable works of Paley cannot be exempted. Writers of the Socinian cast exclude from Christianity, that which constitutes it the religion of a sinner. Should we by external evidence be convinced of the truth of revelation, if we embrace their sentiments, there is little in it to interest the heart. To these may be added, a disposition which has appeared of late, to account for the infidelity of some eminent characters, without imputing to them any moral blame. Besides other circumstances, the terms and style of theologians are sufficient to disgust every scholar, and are held up as one great cause of the rejection of their doctrines. Mr. Foster, in his very valuable essays, appears on this topic to have gone too far; it is not by the wisdom of words, but by the foolishness of preaching, that God is pleased to save them that believe.

2. Many who still profess to believe the scriptures, have not that respect for them, nor that value for their doctrines, which was common among Protestants at, and for some time subsequent to the Reformation. Men who would be offended with the name of infidel, have impeached the credit of some of the sacred writers, rejected from others passages which did not accord with their peculiar system; and degraded all of them from that high station, to which, in the opinion of our forefathers, they were so justly entitled. When we are told of the difficulties to be encountered before we can ascertain their meaning, we might judge them ob-

scure as the responses of the Delphic oracle ; and, if for safety we put ourselves under the guidance of one of these sage interpreters, however substantial, or important the passage at our outset might have appeared, when stript of eastern hyperbole, and Jewish phraseology, it is nought but a shadow. The irreverence with which the German divines treat the sacred writers, has long been known ; perhaps similar instances of disrespect might be found among ourselves ; at least in our periodical publications, some of which appear to have been very successful instruments in freeing the public mind from the shackles of religion. " Nor is it to be forgotten," says a late writer in the *Monthly Review*, " that Paul was tinctured with the theology of the school of Gamaliel, and his epistles ought to be perused under this recollection." As the apostle mentions another instructor whom he had in theology, (Gal. i. 11, 12) and seems to lay considerable stress on this, that he received not his gospel from man ; it would have been but decent in the Reviewer, before contradicting him, to have told us whence his information was derived. Besides, there are many by whom the doctrines of the gospel are admitted as true, but at the same time treated as unimportant. This appears often in biographical sketches, in which persons are exhibited, as distinguished for all that is great and good, without the least hint that they were actuated by Christian principles ; and at last safely placed in the mansions of bliss, without the smallest allusion to Jesus, the only way of access to the Father. Many a sermon

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might be adduced, to prove that if the preacher believed the doctrines of the gospel to be true, he did not at least think them of sufficient importance to be introduced into his compositions. He must have been a very careless observer, who has not often remarked that in conversation, the truths of scripture are often contradicted by those, who seem to entertain no doubt of their own Christianity. If then it is a fair criterion, to judge of the progress of religion by the respect paid to the sacred scriptures, and if the representation here given be just, no doubt can remain but that among us, religion has been, and still is, on the decline.

3. But though we may have dropt somewhat of the theory, it may be alleged, that we have made great progress in the practice of religion. Persecution, the stain of humanity, and the disgrace of our Reformers, is now abolished. The investigators of truth are marked by a liberality of mind, and freedom of inquiry, in their own speculations ; and by a candour and charity to those, who differ from them, unknown till the present enlightened age. " Let another man praise thee," said Solomon, " and not thine own mouth." What is proper for an individual, might not be unsuitable to a nation ; and were the age modest, as well as enlightened, posterity might be trusted with the celebration of our praise. It is readily admitted, that the first reformers did not entirely lay aside the spirit of persecution ; yet in this they acted on principle, though a mistaken one, that they, who believed not the truth of God, nor worshipped him in the way of

his appointment, ought to be punished by men. Episcopalians were frequently guilty of persecution; and Presbyterians too, I am sorry to say, displayed much of the same spirit. But there was this difference between them: Episcopalians persecuted for noncompliance, with what they themselves acknowledged to be indifferent: Presbyterians were unwilling to tolerate those who did not adopt a form of government, which they deemed essential to the *well being* of a Christian church. But is it certain, that no latent spark of this spirit still remains, ready to burst forth on proper occasions? A disposition to bear down their opponents, by other weapons than those, which the apostles used, is alleged to have appeared oftener than once among their successors in the southern part of the island; and in Hill's View of the Church of Scotland, there are some sentiments which would by no means disgrace the lips of a Spanish inquisitor. With gratitude let us bless God for the freedom from persecution, which we have so long enjoyed; nor let us forget, that to our civil, more than to our religious rulers, we are indebted for this blessing.

But it is supposed, that in liberality, candour, and charity, we as far excel the Reformers, as they surpassed us in zeal. In your valuable publication, that indifference to religious truth, which is so often veiled under the name of charity, has been already well described; and I have no wish to resume the subject. To steer clear of persecution and illiberality, it is surely not necessary to maintain the innocence of error; for if error is innocent,

truth is useless. Yet this is the extreme into which some have gone, whilst others of the same school, who appear to be in earnest in what they assert, can hardly be said to possess all the candour of which the age boasts. Dr. Priestly was accounted the most candid man of his party; and now that he is gone, the palm of candour may perhaps be transferred to Mr. Belsham. In a recent publication, speaking of Calvinism, he describes it as "a rigorous, a gloomy, and a pernicious system; as full of horror; as the very extravagance of errors; and as a mischievous compound of impiety and idolatry." "The God of Calvinism," says he, "is a gloomy, arbitrary tyrant; a malignant, omnipotent demon." Though the object of censure is different, Mr. Belsham is as keen, and, if we durst say it, almost as illiberal as an old Puritan. But Calvinists, I suspect, are not comprehended in the bill of charity; and from Mr. B.'s account of them, it must be acknowledged, they hardly deserve such a favour. With them the ordinary rules of warfare may be set aside; and this pestilent sect, hunted to destruction by every possible means. The above quotation will shew, that candour and liberality are not yet universally prevalent; and that Calvinists are no longer entitled to the exclusive privilege of abusing their opponents.

Much light might be thrown on this subject, by comparing the moral systems of the present day with the morality of scripture, which was that adopted by our first reformers. Our national character ought also to be compared with that of our fathers at the close of the 16th, and during the

greatest part of the 17th century. But as I have already trespassed too far, I shall conclude with observing, that king James would no longer find it necessary to publish a book of sports, to prevent the too strict observance of the Sabbath; and that, if our Confession of Faith and Catechisms were again submitted to the consideration of Parliament, instead of grave discussion, they would provoke to ridicule, or excite disgust.

Αγνώστος.
[*Rel. Mon.*

The following are the Rules, which the celebrated Lord Chief Justice HALE prescribed for himself, at his entrance into office, copied from the original, under his own hand.

THINGS NECESSARY TO BE CONTINUALLY HAD IN REMEMBRANCE.

1. THAT in the administration of justice I am entrusted for God, the king and country; and therefore,

2. That it be done, 1. Uprightly. 2. Deliberately. 3. Resolutely.

3. That I rest not upon my own understanding or strength, but implore and rest upon the direction and strength of God.

4. That in the execution of justice, I carefully lay aside my own passions, and not give way to them, however provoked.

5. That I be wholly intent upon the business I am about, remitting all other cares and thoughts, as unseasonable, and interruptions.

6. That I suffer not myself to be prepossessed with any judgment at all, till the whole business and both parties be heard.

7. That I never engage myself in the beginning of any cause, but reserve myself unprejudiced till the whole be heard.

8. That in business capital, though my nature prompt me to pity; yet to consider, that there is also a pity due to the country.

9. That I be not too rigid in matters purely conscientious, where all the harm is diversity of judgment.

10. That I be not biassed with compassion to the poor, or favour to the rich, in point of justice.

11. That the popular, or court applause, or distaste, have no influence in any thing I do in point of distribution of justice.

12. Not to be solicitous what men will say or think, so long as I keep myself exactly according to the rules of justice.

13. If in criminals it be a measuring cast, to incline to mercy and acquittal.

14. The criminals that consist merely in words, when no more harm ensues, moderation is no injustice.

15. In criminals of blood, if the fact be evident, severity is justice.

16. To abhor all private solicitations, of what kind soever, and by whomsoever, in matters depending.

17. To charge my servants,
1. Not to interpose in any business whatsoever. 2. Not to take more than their known fees. 3. Not to give any undue prece-

dence to causes. 4. Not to recommend council.

18. To be short and sparing at meals, that I may be the fitter for business.

MISCELLANIES.

ON KILLING GAME.

MR. GILPIN, in his remarks on the scenery of the Isle of Wight, (See Observations on the Western Parts of England, &c. London, 1798, p. 339) having noticed the immense swarms of sea fowl, which at certain seasons hang on the beetling precipices near the Needles, proceeds, as follows :

"That man has a right to destroy such animals as are *noxious* to him is undoubted. That he has a right also over the lives of such animals as are *useful* to him for food and other necessities, is equally unquestioned. But whether he has a right to destroy life for his *amusement*, is another question. If he is determined to *act the tyrant* (that is, to consider *power* as conferring *right*;) the point is decided. Power he certainly has. But if he wish to act on authorized and equitable principles, let him just point out the passage in his charter of rights over the brute creation, which gives him the liberty of destroying life for his *amusement*.

"On Noah, and in him on all mankind,
The charter was conferr'd, by which
 we hold
The flesh of animals in fee ; and claim
O'er all we feed on, power of life and
 death.
But read the instrument, and mark it
 well.
The oppression of a tyrannous control
Can find no warrant there."

"I would not enter on my list of
 friends

(Though grac'd with polish'd manners
 and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility,) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a
 worm."

"The sum is this. If man's convenience, health,
Or safety interfere, his rights and
 claims

Are paramount, and must extinguish
 theirs.

Else they are all—the meanest things
 that are—

As free to live, and to enjoy that life,
As God was free to form them at the
 first,

Who in his sovereign wisdom made
 them all."

COWPER'S *Task*.

That hares, and partridges and woodcocks, and all other animals fit for food, may be deprived of life for the purpose of being used for food, is unquestionable. The profession, therefore, of a game-keeper or a warrener is equally innocent with that of a butcher. But the *sportsman* will do well to ask himself, Whether, though the animals which he kills are fit for food, amusement is not, as his appellation indicates, his main object in destroying them ; and whether, to use Mr. Gilpin's language, a clause authorizing their destruction for that object is to be found in his charter of rights over the brute creation ? X. Y.

[*Ch. Obs.*

A HERMIT'S MEDITATION.

The author unknown.

In lonesome cave,
Of noise and interruption void,
His thoughtful solitude
A Hermit thus enjoy'd :
 His choicest book
The remnant of a human head
 The volume was—whence he
This solemn lecture read.

Whoe'er thou wert,
Partner of my retirement now,
My nearest intimate,
My best companion thou!

On thee to muse
The busy living world I left;
Of converse all but thine,
And silent that,—bereft!

Wert thou the rich,
The idol of a gazing crowd?
Wert thou the great,
To whom obsequious thousands
bow'd?

Was learning's store
E'er treasur'd up within this shell?
Did wisdom e'er within
This empty hollow dwell?

Did youthful charms
E'er redden on this ghastful face?
Did beauty's bloom these cheeks,
This forehead ever grace?

If on this brow
E'er sat the scornful, haughty frown,
Deceitful pride! where now
Is that disdain?—'tis gone!

If cheerful mirth
A gayness o'er this baldness, cast,
Delusive fleeting joy!
Where is it now?—'tis past!

To deck this scalp
If tedious long-liv'd hours it cost,
Vain fruitless toil! where's now
That labour seen?—'tis past!

But painful sweat,
The dear earn'd price of daily bread,
Was all, perhaps, that thee
With hungry sorrows fed?

Perhaps but tears,
Surest relief of heart sick wo,
Thine only drink, from down
These sockets us'd to flow!

Oppress'd perhaps
With mis'ry, and with aged cares,
Down to the grave thou brought'st
A few and hoary hairs!

'Tis well, perhaps!
No marks, no token can I trace
What on this stage of life
Thy rank or station was!

Nameless, unknown!
Of all distinction stript and bare,
In nakedness conceal'd;
Oh! who shall thee declare?

Nameless, unknown!
Yet fit companion thou for me,
Who hear no human voice,
Nor human visage see!

From me, from thee,
The glories of the world are gone!
Nor yet have either lost
What we could call our own!

What we are now,
The great, the wise, the fair, the brave,
Shall all hereafter be,—
All hermits in the grave. [Ch. Obs.

PURITAN.

A PRETTY correct anticipation of the use of the term *Calvinist* is given by Fuller in his account of the use of the term *Puritan*. "We must not forget, that Spalatro,* (I am confident I am not mistaken therein) was the first, who, professing himself a Protestant, used the word PURITAN, to signify the defenders of matters doctrinal in the English church. Formerly the word was only taken to denote such as dissented from the hierarchy in discipline and church government, which was now extended to brand such as were Anti-Arminians in their judgments. As Spalatro first abused the word in this sense, so we could wish he had carried it away with him in his return to Rome. Whereas now, leaving the word behind him in this extensive signification thereof, it hath since by others been improved to asperse the most orthodox in doctrine, and religious in conversation." Book x. Sect. vi. [Ch. Obs.

* The name of this unhappy man, true only to his own avarice, was Antonio de Dominis, archbishop of Spalatro, misspelt by Fuller Spalato. He is celebrated as the editor of Fra-Paolo's History of the Council of Trent in London.

Review of New Publications.

A Sermon, preached before the Convention of the Congregational ministers in Boston, May 27, 1807. By JOHN REED, D. D. pastor of the First Church, and Congregational Society in Bridgewater. pp. 38. Boston. Munroe & Francis. 1807.

THE occasion on which this sermon was delivered; the character of the auditory; the principal subject of which it treats; and the respectability of its author, all conspire to confer upon it a greater degree of importance, than usually belongs to single discourses. We shall, therefore, examine it more at length, and with more care, than we have commonly bestowed on similar productions.

The passage of scripture selected, as the foundation of this discourse is Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10, "*But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, who is in heaven: Neither be ye called master, for one is your Master, even Christ.*" We doubt the propriety of this selection. The text was intended to put the disciples of Christ on their guard against a spirit of *ambition* and *domination*, especially over the consciences of men in matters of faith. The sermon is chiefly employed in endeavouring to shew, that Christians ought not to think or speak ill of each other on account of differences of opinion. There is now and then indeed a remark in unison with the text; but the body of the discourse, we think, is not

so. We are not however to be surprised at this. A preacher must be contented with the best text he can find; and if we understand the scope of Dr. R.'s sermon, it would not have been easy for him to have found a passage of scripture, from which it could be legitimately deduced.

So far as Dr. R. reprobates an assumption of authority over the consciences of men; so far as he opposes uncharitable and rash judging, prejudice, bigotry, rancour, violence, and bitterness of censure, we cordially concur with him: and though some of his remarks on these topics, may not be so immediately suggested by the text; yet we shall offer no objection against their being introduced and urged. But when he speaks against the use of *creeds* and *confessions*; when he proposes that we should regard those, who agree with us, and those, who differ from us, with respect to the most important articles of Christian faith, "with equal satisfaction;" (p. 38) when he seems entirely to forbid our forming an unfavourable opinion, or expressing a fixed and decided abhorrence of heretical sentiments; when, in short, he exhorts us to hate nothing but *vice*, and to despise nothing but *selfish, illiberal notions*, we are constrained to pause and to ask, Whether this strain of address can be reconciled with scripture? and, indeed, Whether it comports with some things advanced by the author himself, in different parts of this discourse?

Can it be reconciled with scripture? We think not. The

sacred writings speak of *damnable heresies*; of *contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*; and of *rebuking men sharply, that they may be sound in the faith*. The apostle John declares, *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed*. The apostle Paul says, *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject*. What is the meaning of these passages? Not that we should undertake to judge the hearts of men; not that we should attempt or desire to be "*Lords over the conscience*;" not that we should condemn rashly and without evidence, or censure with harshness and malevolence, or presume to decide on the final state of those, who hold unsound opinions; but that we carefully discriminate between the truth, as it is in Jesus, and opposite errors; that we love the former and abhor the latter, in proportion to the degree in which they appear to be heretical and mischievous; that we oppose the abettors of heresy, not with personal malice, but with the firmest decision, and with detestation of their false principles; and that, instead of employing language or conduct, which can be considered as giving countenance to their errors, it is our duty, if the interests of religion require it, to hold them up to public view, in their true light, in order to diminish their influence, and to guard men

against their delusion. Nay, this is not only the plain meaning of the passages above cited, and of others of a similar kind, but it is the necessary result of another principle plainly taught in scripture. If all modes of religious faith were equally safe, as to the final attainment of salvation, we might well feel both surprised and indignant to see men, zealously contending for a particular creed, and bearing a warm testimony against different opinions. But when the Holy Ghost has pronounced some heresies to be *damnable*, will not every real Christian strive to avoid such heresies himself, and warn others, as he has opportunity, against embracing them? While he loves the most extravagant heretics, as men, is ever ready to do them good, and daily prays for their conversion and salvation; he will feel it to be as much his duty to abhor their false doctrines, and, if they are doing secret mischief, to detect and expose them, as to counteract the poison administered by an unprincipled physician, or to unfold a conspiracy against the state.

Nor is such conduct in the least degree inconsistent with Christian charity. Dr. R. in some instances, uses this word, in what we must think an unscriptural sense. An eminent writer, has justly said, that "*Charity, in the language of scripture, means an ardent and unfeigned love to others, and a desire of their welfare, temporal and eternal; and may very well consist with the strongest abhorrence of their wicked principles, and the deepest concern for their dangerous state.*" That

man, therefore, is the most *charitable*, who is filled with the warmest desire for the salvation of men, and is most faithful in warning them against those principles, which corrupt and destroy. And accordingly bishop Burnet excellently observes, that "whatever moderation or charity we may owe to men's *persons*, we owe none at all to their *errors*, nor to that frame which is built on and supported by them."

When one class of men believe that human nature is totally depraved; that there is no salvation but through the atoning sacrifice of Christ; that the Saviour is a divine person, and that to represent him as a mere man, is subverting the foundations of his gospel, and destroying the hopes of the soul: and when another class believe, that man is now as pure and upright as ever; that to speak of an atonement is to dishonour God; that the Saviour is a mere man; that of course to acknowledge and worship him as God, is gross and abominable idolatry; it is difficult to conceive how these two classes can mutually regard each other with the same satisfaction, as those who perfectly agree. If the *Calvinist* be right, he cannot consider the *Socinian*, as a Christian at all; but must contemplate and represent him, when he has occasion to speak on the subject, as an *enemy of the cross of Christ*. And on the other hand, so far as the *Socinian* believes in the truth of his own principles, he must regard the *Calvinist*, as a superstitious and idolatrous corrupter of Christianity. These persons may have much intercourse as neighbours.

Their intercourse may be friendly, and even affectionate. There is no good reason why they should contend with bitterness, or cherish towards each other a malignant or rancorous temper. But that each, so far as he is honest to his principles, and in earnest in his way, must abhor and detest the system of the other, as radically corrupt, as awfully destructive, is too evident to require proof. Dr. Priestly did not hesitate to concede this. He acknowledged with characteristic frankness, in conversation with an American divine, that when *Calvinists* denied him the title of *Christian*, and denounced him as little better than a sober *Deist*, he considered them as speaking a language, which, supposing their system to be true, was inevitable and right.

Dr. R. tells us that "the primitive Christians differed greatly in their opinions, but were remarkable for their brotherly love and friendship." If by this he means, that the disciples of Christ, in the primitive ages of the church, held free and affectionate communion with each other, while they entertained radically different opinions about such fundamental points, as original depravity, the divinity and atonement of the Saviour, and the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify the soul, we know not whence he has derived his information, and, until he produces his authority, must doubt the fact. We know that one great reason why the pagans were so much enraged against the earliest Christians, was their holding and avowing such rigid and exclusive opinions with respect to

the only way of salvation. This was a new doctrine, and it highly offended them.

But is Dr. R. consistent with himself? Here also we feel constrained to answer in the negative. He speaks much of charity, and of a mild and indulgent temper towards those who differ from us. But he seems to confine this entirely to those who call themselves Christians. Why this restriction? Does a sober Deist differ from a *Socinian* nearly as much, as a *Socinian* differs from a *Calvinist*? Certainly not. Why then should we not include the Deist in our charity, as well as the Socinian? The profound remark, that "*we differ from him as much as he differs from us,*" applies as perfectly to the former, as to the latter.

Dr. R. while he pleads for universal mildness and charity, is frequently severe on the rigid and "excluding" advocates of orthodoxy. But why so? If *all*, without exception, who profess to believe in the Christian religion, and whose moral character is good, are to be regarded "*with equal satisfaction,*" however they may differ from each other in articles of faith, why not extend to the highest toned Calvinist, the same indulgence which is granted to the most lax heretic? It is one of the most curious phenomena of modern liberality, that every thing can be borne but strict unbending orthodoxy; that every man is sure of indulgent and even of respectful treatment, excepting one, who has such a deep impression of the importance of divine truth, and so tender a conscience, that he cannot yield to the polite concessions, and temporizing compliments of his

more liberal neighbours. We shall never think this kind of liberality consistent with itself, until it learns to bear with the most rigidly excluding system of principles, as well as of practice.

On the whole, we are by no means satisfied with the strain of reasoning, which pervades this discourse. We cannot think that Dr. R. has given a just or discriminating view of the manner in which professing Christians, who differ radically among themselves, ought to feel towards, and treat each other. We agree with him in believing, that they ought not to indulge in rancour or bitterness, or to dispute with a spirit of pride and dogmatism. But if Christians are not bound to cleave to what they deem the truth, with supreme love, and ardent zeal; if they are not enjoined to oppose error in every form, and especially those errors which affect the character of the divine Saviour, and the foundation of our hope towards God; if they are not under obligations to withstand and denounce, as unsound teachers, and as false guides those, who *preach another gospel*; in a word, if they are not bound to consider those who reject the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and substitute the miserable and insufficient devices of human wisdom, as enemies of the cross of Christ; and with a mild and becoming temper speak of them as such, and when called upon, to warn others against their fatal delusions; if they are not bound to do this, (which may all be done without one uncharitable or unchristian feeling towards the persons of the deluded) then we

acknowledge ourselves to have mistaken the language, and the spirit of the sacred volume. But if Christian duty be such, as has been stated, we must think that Dr. R. has given a very vague and unsatisfactory, if not erroneous, view of the subject.

With respect to minor observations on this discourse, we have few to make. The arrangement, though perhaps not so distinctly announced, or so formally marked, as could be wished, is not objectionable. The style, though sometimes chargeable with redundancy and diffuseness, and in a few instances with inaccuracy, is simple, perspicuous, smooth and generally correct. Dr. R. writes like a gentleman and a scholar. It would give us cordial pleasure, if we were able to declare ourselves as well pleased with the matter, as with the form.

DR. REES' CYCLOPÆDIA, VOL. I.
PART I.

Continued from page 134.

ABBADIE. We are happy to observe, that the American Editors, in a subjoined paragraph, have rescued this able defender of *the faith, as once delivered to the saints*, from the influence of an assertion, in his character, as given by the English editors, that his judgment was inferior to his imagination, learning, &c. But as Abbadie was a distinguished advocate for the doctrine of the Trinity, it is not difficult to assign the cause of such an assertion.

Under the articles *Abbreviation*, *Adverb*, and *Adversative*, Dr. Rees, (for him we name to save needless circumlocution)

has, with great judgment, made use of the discoveries of Horne Tooke, in his *Diversions of Purley*. The labours of this grammarian have thrown much light on the principles of language, and are of such a nature as to enrich a General Dictionary. Our countryman, Mr. Webster, is engaged with ardour in pursuing the same plan; and we hope, at some future time, the public will be benefited by his labours.

ABEL, the name of a great stone mentioned in the scripture history, is added in the American edition.

Those, who are pleased with the lives of military worthies, will derive satisfaction from the account of the late Sir Ralph Abercromby, in a neat, well written article, which is added by the American editors.

ABERNETHY, John. Concerning this article we have already expressed our opinion and our regret at some of the omissions of the American editors.* We think it proper to add a few remarks on this article, which has excited such warmth of feeling and strong disapprobation in the Boston reviewers.

Some of our readers, perhaps, need to be informed, that the Rev. Mr. Abernethy was a distinguished Presbyterian minister settled first at Antrim, and afterwards at Dublin, in Ireland; that he became obnoxious to the synod of which he was a member, on account of some opinions, which he expressed and defended with respect to religious freedom; and that he was finally excluded from the synod; which proceeding was called, by his

* See p. 132. Vol. III. for August.

friends, an act of persecution, and by the advocates of the synod, an act of discipline. Dr. Rees has given him a very excellent character, which he professes to quote from the *Biographia Britannica*. The American editors, conceiving, probably, that some parts were the offspring of too fond a partiality for a friend, and that others savoured of party spirit, simply omitted all such passages, and left his character to stand on its merits, after fairly stating facts. The following are the most important omissions.

"He was much respected not only by his brethren in the ministry, but by many of the laity, who were pleased with the urbanity of his manners. His talents and virtues gave him a considerable ascendancy in the synod, so that he had a large share in the management of public affairs. As a speaker he was considered as their chief ornament; and he maintained his character in these respects, and his interest in their esteem to the last, even when a change of his religious sentiments had excited the opposition of many violent antagonists."

"For this event (his death) he was fully prepared, and he met it with great composure and firmness of mind, a cheerful acquiescence in the will, and a fixed trust in the power and goodness, of the Almighty."

"His two volumes of discourses of the Divine Attributes are still held in the highest esteem by those, who are disposed to approve the most liberal and manly sentiments on the great subject of natural religion,"

However well intended may have been these omissions, and though much may be said in justification of the motives of the editors, we still think they have furnished a dangerous example to others, which by designing men might be improved to the injury of historical and religious truth. Honesty is ever the best policy. We applaud their wis-

dom and candour in adopting a different plan of conducting the work.

If the English Life was true and just, such a subtraction from it is highly censurable; if the subject is praised more than truth will warrant, better have fairly shewn it, and openly taken it away. If the spirit of party has heaped deceitful panegyric upon a favourite, let this be made to appear, and the error corrected; and let us know also to whom we are indebted for the discovery and correction. It is not improbable that the American editors considered Mr. Abernethy as a latitudinarian divine; (whether truly or not, is not now the question) and that they were desirous his character should have no more than its due weight and influence against the cause of evangelical truth; and therefore left it to stand on the facts and incidents of his life, which they have given exactly from Dr. Rees. But, though friends to evangelical truth ourselves, we cannot conceal, that we deem this mode of accomplishing their object extremely unfortunate. It is unfortunate, as it throws doubt and distrust over every religious article in their voluminous publication. Suppose the life of the venerable President Edwards should be written in this country, by some person of a kindred feeling, with that glow of affection and admiration, which those who are fond of his writings are apt to feel; and suppose it should be republished in England by a Socinian, who should, without notice, and without authority, (for every man is considered destitute of authority till he produces it) leave out all those passages

which expressed how much he was loved by his friends, respected by the clergy, and revered by all; how sedulously he examined, how firmly he defended the truth; with what benevolence he lived, with what humble confidence he died! What would be said of such a publisher? But what is past can easily be forgiven, as the editors have now explicitly informed their readers what is to be received under the sanction of Dr. Rees' responsibility, and what under that of their own.

The article *ABORTION* has been enlarged with a number of observations on the causes and prevention of this misfortune, either when habitual or accidental, with some advice on the proper treatment of the patient in such circumstances.

Under the article *Abridgment*, the practice of abridging books that are read, or the lectures of public professors in the various departments of science, is recommended as highly useful to assist both the judgment and memory. Two excellent specimens of the kind of abridgment recommended, are subjoined, and which we have extracted for the use of our readers.

In the *Essay on Miracles*, Mr. Hume's design is to prove, that miracles, which have not been the immediate objects of our senses, cannot reasonably be believed upon the testimony of others. His argument is,

"That experience, which in some things is variable, in others uniform, is our *only* guide in reasoning concerning matters of fact. Variable experience gives rise to probability only; an uniform experience amounts to proof. Our belief of any fact from the testimony of eye witnesses is derived from no other principle than our experience of the veracity of human testimony. If the fact attested be

miraculous, here arises a contest of two opposite experiences, or proof against proof. Now a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as complete as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined; and if so, it is an undeniable consequence, that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever derived from human testimony."

In Dr. Campbell's *Dissertation on Miracles*, the author's principal aim is to shew the fallacy of Mr. Hume's argument; which he has most successfully done, by another single argument, in the following manner:

"The evidence arising from human testimony is *not solely* derived from experience; on the contrary, testimony hath a natural influence on belief antecedent to experience. The early and unlimited assent given to testimony by children gradually contracts, as they advance in life: it is, therefore, more consonant to truth to say, that our *diffidence* in testimony is the result of experience, than that our *faith* in it has this foundation. Besides, the uniformity of experience in favour of any fact, is not a proof against its being reversed in a particular instance. The evidence arising from the single testimony of a man of known veracity, will go far to establish a belief in its being actually reversed. If his testimony be confirmed by a few others of the same character, we cannot withhold our assent to the truth of it. Now, though the operations of nature are governed by uniform laws, and though we have not the testimony of our senses in favour of any *violation* of them; still, if in particular instances we have the testimony of thousands of our fellow-creatures, and those too men of strict integrity, swayed by no motives of ambition or interest, and governed by the principles of common sense, that they were actually witnesses of these violations, the constitution of our nature obliges us to believe them."

These two examples contain the substance of about 400 pages.

The article *Absorbents*, is enlarged in such a manner as to suggest several new thoughts to

the medical student on the doctrine of *cutaneous absorption*.

ACACIA, in *Botany*, has received a valuable addition from Dr. Mitchell.

Under the word *Academy* has been introduced an account of the Academy of Fine Arts in Pennsylvania, of the Academy of Medicine in Philadelphia, and of the American Academy of Arts in New York. The account of the Massachusetts Academy of Arts and Sciences has been advantageously enlarged. We hope the editors will assiduously endeavour to supply all deficiencies of the English edition on American subjects.

ACCOMMODATION, in *Theology*. A great part of this, as it appeared in the English edition, has been omitted in the American edition without giving notice to the reader, or mentioning the reasons for the omissions. Though we do not think subscribers have lost any thing valuable under this article, yet for the reasons already mentioned we disapprove of any alteration of a work given to the public as the Cyclopædia of Dr. Rees, without explicit marks of such alteration.

ACHILLES. We confess ourselves not well pleased that Christian critics, and Christian editors, should contribute to raise still higher the admiration of Homer's hero, when it is already more than sufficiently excited by the charms of poetry. The character which Horace gives of this mad warrior, *Impiger, iracundus*, &c. though spirited, is very far short of what he might have said in truth; but it seems even this is too much in the opinion of Dr. Blair, who has

deliberately composed a palliation, which is admitted into Dr. Rees' work. The reader of Homer knows that a more savage destroyer of the lives and happiness of men, a more zealous bigot to cruelty and revenge, than Achilles, rarely, if ever, existed, even in imagination. The tendency of such an example, operating on the corrupt inclinations of men, ought to be counteracted by every possible means; so that, though we admire the genius of Homer, we may be taught to detest the character of his heroes, and be no more in danger of imitating them, than of throwing ourselves into a conflagration, on which we gaze at a distance, with sublime astonishment. For a just criticism on Homer, and his favourite Achilles, see Foster's *Essays*, a work which will give great pleasure to every Christian reader of taste.

Short, but useful additions have been made to the articles *Acid* and *Acorus*.

ACTION, in *Oratory*, is a blundering article, in which the writer comes to a conclusion directly contrary to all his reasonings. His arguments tend to show the impropriety of using action in public speaking at all, while his conclusion is, that, if properly conducted, it "gives to the speaker in the senate, at the bar, and in the pulpit, very great advantage in enforcing his argument and impressing an audience." Can it be doubted by a grave and learned man especially, whether action be allowable? As well might it be doubted, whether a man should be suffered to *speak* in public. The best method, undoubtedly, will be followed

by those public speakers, who endeavour to speak to purpose, and who use all the powers which God has given them to gain attention, and produce conviction. Much damage to the cause of religion has been done by the opinion propagated by some pious and well meaning divines, that there should be no action in the pulpit ; as though a dull, uniform manner of reading sermons were the most effectual way of influencing men to attend to their most important interests. The rule for public speakers, which embraces all other rules, is "Act as though you were earnest in your business."

ADAM, in *Biography*, is deficient in several important particulars. The reader ought to be informed, what has generally been the opinion of divines, as to the meaning of the threatening, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *dying thou shalt die*. It is certainly important, that this portion of scripture should be interpreted rightly. We are not backward to express our conviction, that the denunciation implied death temporal and eternal. *Dying thou shalt die forever*. When the editors say, "there is a certain dignity of intellect, as well as rectitude of will, that is probably implied in the expressions *our image* and *our likeness*," they do not sufficiently explain the nature of that dignity and rectitude, with which Adam was endued by his Creator. Our first parents bore the moral image of God ; it was impossible they should bear any other image of him. They were perfectly holy, pure, and benevolent, and every way disposed to serve God, and

promote each other's happiness. As to their moral character, before the fall, they truly and exactly resembled their Maker. It would have been well, if more useful knowledge, with respect to the *first of mankind*, had been collected and inserted in place of the fables of Rabbins, and Mahometans.

IN ADAM, MELCHIOR, is an error of the press, which is mentioned not so much on account of its importance, as that the Editors, if they should see this review, may be cautious of errors in quotations from the learned languages ; this not being the first we have seen. Books in general are very faulty in this respect. Instead of *Vita illustriorum virorum*, it should be *illustrum*. We ought in justice, however, to say, that this work is more free from errors of the press, than any similar one we have known.

We are pleased to see that revolutionary patriot, SAMUEL ADAMS, introduced into this work. A person desirous of obtaining a good knowledge of American Biography will be sorry however to find the article so short and imperfect. We understand that voluminous and valuable papers of Mr. Adams', which throw much light on the history of the American Revolution, are in possession of his heirs. We hope some patriotic and enterprising bookseller will cheerfully lend his aid in their publication. The American editors will contribute much to the gratification of the public by paying peculiar attention to the Biography of our eminent countrymen. Of these there are many whose lives have never been written, except in a

hasty manner for the perishable columns of a newspaper.

There are four articles under the head of ADAMS, in *Geography*, added, viz. a town in Massachusetts, a county in the state of Ohio, another in the Mississippi Territory, and another in Pennsylvania.

In the article ADES or HADES, Dr. Rees has, with great propriety, introduced the explanation which Dr. Campbell has given of this word. It ought to be known to the mass of those, who read the Bible, that the word *hell*, in several instances in the New Testament, means the *invisible state*, and embraces all the dead, as distinguished from the living. The word, which conveys the idea of the place of future punishment, though translated into English by the word *hell*, is *gehenna*, and not *hades*. The Hebrew word, which answers to *hades*, viz. *sheöl*, ought, in the Old Testament, to have been translated to mean in some instances the *grave*, in others the *invisible state*, or the world of *departed spirits*.

To be continued.

A Discourse delivered at Plymouth, 22d Dec. 1806, at the Anniversary Commemoration of the first landing of the Fathers, A. D. 1620. By Abiel Holmes, D. D. Cambridge. 1806. pp. 32.

DESCENDED from some of the best of men, the inhabitants of Plymouth, (the first European settlement in New-England) justly glory in their ancestors, and celebrate the anniversary of their landing, in grateful commemoration of

their virtues and their sufferings. The discourse now under review was delivered upon one of these occasions, at the request of a committee of the town, and was published by their desire.

The anniversary has frequently been denominated "Forefathers' day;" and we think it not improbable that this, or some similar circumstance, may have suggested "*Whose are the Fathers*" (Rom. ix. 5) to the mind of the preacher, as a text suited to the occasion.

After an appropriate introduction, he inquires, "Who these fathers were; what were their characters; what were their religious principles; and what privileges there are in a descent from them?"

Under the first head of inquiry, it occurs to the mind of the preacher, that the story of their forefathers was already familiar to them, and that the reiterated recital of it had left but little unrehearsed; but he justly remarks, that "unless it be repeated, when, in process of time, your children shall say, *what mean ye by this service?* the answer will be vague and unsatisfactory." In guarding against such an inconvenience, Dr. H. has judiciously detailed the causes, which occasioned the removal of the fathers; has adverted to the difficulties which attended it; to their pious conduct upon this important occasion; to the dangers they afterwards encountered, and the hardships they endured; and to the merciful interpositions of divine providence in their favour. An enumeration of all these particulars does not appear to have been necessary in answering the question, *who were the fathers?*

Yet there is so much connexion between the latter and the former, that no violence is done to the feelings of the reader upon this occasion ; and the story is calculated to excite a particular interest in favour of the pilgrims.

Under the second head the fathers are characterized, as "distinguished by integrity, piety, Christian zeal, and primitive simplicity of manners:" and the names of a number are mentioned, who were eminent amongst them. "These illustrious names, (the preacher remarks) and the merits attached to them, are entirely familiar to you ; nor would faithful tradition, or your own more faithful records ever suffer them to pass into oblivion. To a tablet, however, less perishable than either of these, are those names committed ; and it ought to heighten the pleasures of this day to reflect, that a biographer, worthy of them, has at length been found. While faithful narrative, discriminating remark, and purity of style, continue to be universally pleasing, the fathers of New England will live in the pages of BELKNAP."

Under the next head of inquiry the *religious principles* of the forefathers are detailed at considerable length ; this was the more necessary, as they have been much misrepresented both by ignorant and designing men. The recapitulation, whilst it shews how anxious our fathers were to found their faith upon the word of God, and to contend earnestly for it, as being thus founded, must reprove many of their descendants for their lukewarmness respecting it, and their departure from its principles ; "principles

of which no one of their descendants will be ashamed, if he be *not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*"

The *privileges attending a descent from such ancestors*, form the next subject for consideration. After hinting at those possessed by the Jews, to which the apostle alludes in the text, the preacher remarks, "Not unlike these, men and brethren, are our privileges in deriving an origin from the fathers of New England. To us, through their means, are committed the same oracles of God, which were transmitted by the Hebrew patriarchs to their descendants, with the additional discovery of those things, which *many prophets and kings desired in vain to see*. To us, too, through the medium of our Christian fathers, are made the same promises, which were made to the Hebrew fathers ; for *the promises were unto them, and to their children, and to all afar off, even as many as the Lord should call*. To us has been transmitted from the fathers, the reformed protestant religion, as free probably from human mixtures, as it can be found in any church in christendom. In our fathers, too, we have the benefit of examples of exalted virtue and piety, which would have adorned the church in the patriarchal, or the apostolic age."

He then recommends the "study of the history of the fathers, as the history of men, who were but little known to the world, and for that reason often misapprehended and injuriously aspersed ; who though pronounced by some to be bigots, and by others enthusiasts, were truly *lights shining in a dark place* :

who were intent upon holding faith and a good conscience, regardless of human censure, and unambitious of human applause :—and who, from motives purely religious, achieved an enterprize, unparralleled in ancient or in modern times.”

After urging his hearers to respect the characters of the fathers, to cherish their principles and institutions, and to imitate their examples ; the preacher concludes his discourse with the following animated address.

“ Sons of the Pilgrims ! look at yonder rock, on which your fathers first stepped ; look at that brook of which they first drank ; look at the cold ground on which they first lay ; look at the hill where they first met the aboriginal prince ; look at this eminence which they first fortified ; look at the lots which they first enclosed ; look on the earth which covers their remains ; and while ye exclaim, ‘ THESE ARE THE MEMORIALS OF OUR FATHERS,’ imbibe their spirit, and follow their examples, and ye shall hereafter enter into their rest, and sit down with them and with all the holy fathers in the kingdom of heaven.”

Some valuable notes, illustrative of facts referred to, are added to the sermon. With these additions it forms an *whole*, which will convey much information to such readers as are unacquainted with the early history of New England ; and to the sons of the pilgrims it must be peculiarly pleasing, as a memorial justly honourable to the eminent virtues of their fathers.

Village Sermons ; or plain and short Discourses on the principal doctrines of the gospel ; intended for the use of families, Sunday schools, or companies
Vol. III. No. 4.

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assembled for religious instruction in country villages. In three vols. By George Burder. Third American edition. Boston. E. Lincoln. 1807.

It is a curious fact, and to the benevolent mind, highly interesting and delightful, that the zeal for *foreign* missions, far from damping, has greatly increased the ardour for diffusing Christian knowledge *at home*. The singular exertions which have been made in Great Britain and the United States, within the last twelve years, to send the gospel to the heathen, have been attended with a correspondent concern for the ignorant and vicious among themselves. At no preceding period, has such a variety of methods been adopted to enlighten and reclaim them.

One of the forms of this pious charity, as practised in England, is brought to view in a passage of Mr. Burder's preface ; which likewise communicates an idea of the peculiar design and character of these volumes.

“ The following sermons are intended, primarily, for the use of those pious and zealous persons, who, pitying the deplorable ignorance of their poor neighbours, are accustomed to go into country villages to instruct them : a practice, which, though but lately adopted, bids fair to produce the most substantial and extensive advantages. A scarcity of discourses, exactly fitted for this benevolent purpose, has been justly complained of ; for though there are hundreds of admirable sermons extant, yet as most of them were originally calculated to edify intelligent and well-informed congregations, and were published on account of some superior excellence in style or composition, they are ill suited to the instruction of a rustic and untaught people. This has induced the author to attempt a few

village sermons—very plain and short, yet on the most interesting subjects, and with frequent appeals to the conscience."

What Mr. B. attempted, he has accomplished. In the course of sixty-five short sermons, he has discussed the principal doctrines of the gospel in a very serious, solemn and convincing manner. Truth is powerfully pressed upon the conscience and heart of the reader; while his attention is kept awake by apt quotations, and not unfrequently, by some striking anecdote. But the prominent and characteristic excellence of these sermons is, that they are plain—adapted to the comprehension of all, not excepting the most ignorant. The pious author, though a man of a cultivated mind, seems designedly to have avoided every species of ornament, and to have applied himself to unfold and enforce the truths of revelation with the greatest simplicity of thought and language.

A collection of sermons, calculated to bring down these things to the level of the lowest capacities, is as valuable as it is rare. Perhaps neither ministers nor others are sufficiently in the habit of reflecting, how ignorant, often, are the great mass of mankind, respecting some of the plainest principles of religion; nor how great familiarity of illustration is necessary in order to their being understood. The usefulness of these sermons, however, is not limited to the less informed class of people; they may be read with advantage by all ranks.

Respecting the author's sentiments, we hesitate not to pronounce them decidedly and pure-

ly evangelical. Those doctrines, which exalt God and the Redeemer, which humble human pride and selfsufficiency, which impart balm to the bleeding heart, and consolation to the sanctified soul, are the doctrines illustrated and enforced in these sermons. At the same time, the author is emphatical, and abundant in reprobating a mere speculative religion, and in pointing out the infallible connexion between genuine faith, and a life of holiness and virtue. In a sermon on Titus ii. 11, 12, we find such sentiments as these:

"The gospel first directs the sinner to repair by faith to Christ, and to obtain the pardon of his sins through his precious blood. This is his first business: and if the sinner be enabled to believe in Jesus, his faith will work by love, will purify his heart, and overcome his lusts. We are not, by our own power, first to reform our lives, and then, as gracious and good people, to trust in Christ for salvation; but, as soon as ever we discover our need of a Saviour, to fly to him without delay, just as we are. And he casts out none that come to him. Believing in him will give a new turn to our affections. We shall mourn for pardoned sin. We shall hate the murderers of our Lord. We shall be crucified to the world by the cross of Jesus; and the ways of godliness will no longer be a burden and a task, but our pleasant and easy service. The love of Christ will constrain us, and we shall judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that henceforth they who live should not live to themselves, but unto him who died for them. Besides, whoever believes in Jesus is really united to him in the same manner as the vine and its branches are united. All our fruitfulness in good works depends on this union. "Abide in me," said our Lord; "thus shall ye bring forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." This is the true secret of godliness, the gospel mystery of sanctification, and the only way of

becoming holy. In this way nothing is too hard to be accomplished; and on this ground every believer may say, with St. Paul, "I can do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The following is one of the inferences from the same subject:

"It appears from what has been said, that there is no ground for the reproach often cast on the gospel of grace, that it leads to licentiousness, or that the doctrine of faith and grace is hurtful to morality and good works. It is a foul and groundless slander. Nothing is more false. Our text confutes it at once. We have shown that the gospel is properly called the grace of God; it is the gospel that bringeth salvation by grace; and this free-grace gospel teacheth us to live a holy life. What can be plainer? And let it be noted, that nothing but the gospel of grace can truly teach or produce a holy life. This was, at first, the power of God to the salvation of bigoted Jews, and beastly heathens. In every succeeding age it has had the same blessed effects. And it is the same to this day. While moral preachers labour in vain, and many of them address their heathen lectures to sleepy hearers and empty pews, we know and are sure, that the plain truths of the gospel are effectual to quicken dead

sinner, to convert notorious rebels, and to produce in numberless persons "the fruits of good living." This is its proper tendency; these its genuine fruits. And we adore the grace that renders the word powerful for these blessed purposes.

"If any false professors of religion abuse the doctrines of grace for licentious practices, they have no countenance in so doing from the gospel, or the preachers of it. Our text will at once confront and confound such base hypocrites. It teaches them the nature, necessity and method of attaining a holy life. Believers were "chosen in Christ, that they might be holy, and without blame before him in love." All the commands of God both in the Old and New Testament, require it. It was an eminent branch of the design of Christ in dying for his people. It is necessary to the present peace and happiness of our souls, in this world of sin and vanity. This is the way in which God expects us to glorify him among men. And in this consists our "meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light."

On the whole, we cordially recommend these volumes to the wealthy, for perusal themselves, and for distribution among the poor.

Religious Intelligence.

With pleasure we insert the following interesting article, copied from the subscription paper, circulated in Connecticut, for the purpose of forming a Religious Tract Society.

TO THE FRIENDS OF RELIGION IN CONNECTICUT.

AMONG the various measures, so successfully employed, within a few years past, for promoting the amendment and salvation of mankind, few, in proportion to the expense and difficulty attending them, have probably been more useful, than those which have been directed to the dispersion of cheap religious Tracts among the poor. Efforts of this nature have been extensively made in Great Britain, and in some degree in the Uni-

ted States; all of which seem to have been followed by happy consequences. Most of the poor find little leisure for reading. It is evident, therefore, that small tracts are better suited to their circumstances, than any other. A man, who can command two or three hours in a week, will very easily be persuaded to peruse a work, which may be finished within that time, who yet by the size of a considerable volume would be deterred from

reading a single page. It is also evident, that the books furnished to such persons, ought, as much as possible, to be those which will allure them to read. The reluctance to reading is always most successfully overcome by the entertaining nature of the book which is furnished. It scarcely needs to be added, that he, who has but little time for reading, ought to employ it only in the most useful books.

All these objects can, it is believed, be accomplished at the present time, and accomplished with moderate expense and little difficulty, for the poor of this country. Short, cheap, and entertaining religious tracts have been published in great numbers, of many kinds, and in a great variety of forms, suited to almost every age, situation, and character. The expense of printing, and distributing them, has been proved, both by estimates and facts, to be moderate. By facts, also, it has been amply proved, that the poor will read, if furnished with the proper books; and that the consequences of this reading are of the most salutary nature. To contribute to the reformation of this unfortunate class of mankind; to withdraw them from the vices, to which by their situation in life they are peculiarly exposed; to prevent such, as hitherto are uncontaminated, from future corruption; to recal such of them, as are stupid in sin, to seriousness and piety; and to increase the comfort, hope, and purity, of those, who are already pious, is an employment, which needs no recommendation to a good man.

At the same time, important benefits have been communicated in Great Britain, and may be communicated here, by selling such tracts to persons in moderate circumstances (constituting a numerous class of mankind) at the original cost, or at reduced prices, as the nature of the case shall direct. Books, it is well known, are, at the present time, much dearer than at any former period. This unfortunate fact prevents many persons from gaining a part, at least, of that valuable instruction, which they would otherwise acquire. In all such cases, this Society would become the useful instrument of providing, and distributing, knowledge of the most important kind, with little expense to itself. The end, here gained, would be the same; and only accomplished in a different manner.

Persuaded of the reality and importance of these truths, a number of gentlemen in this city have embarked in the design of purchasing, and circulating among the poor, small, unexpensive religious tracts. For so benevolent a purpose they feel themselves warranted to solicit the aid of all, who are friends to religion, and to the poor. The scheme, by which they have proposed to regulate their conduct in this business, will be seen in the plan below. Such gentlemen, as approve of this design, are requested to subscribe their names, with the sums annexed, which they choose to contribute; and, when they design the contribution to be annual, to specify that circumstance.

A PLAN FOR THE FORMATION OF A RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

1. The name shall be *The Connecticut Religious Tract Society*.

2. The sole object of the Society shall be the promotion of evangelical religion; and nothing shall be published in the tracts, which shall give any just cause of offence to any particular denomination of Christians.

3. The Society will endeavour to compass this object, by distributing these tracts to the poor *gratis*, and by selling them at the discretion of their committee, at the first cost and charges, or at reduced prices, to other persons, who shall be disposed to purchase.

4. Every subscriber who shall engage to pay annually a sum not less than one dollar, shall be a member so long as the amount of his subscription shall be paid.

5. Every subscriber to the amount of a sum not less than ten dollars shall be a member for life.

6. Every subscriber shall be entitled to three fourths of the amount of his subscription, in tracts at the first cost, and charges.

7. Any person subscribing a sum not sufficient to constitute him a member, shall be entitled to the same proportion of tracts.

8. If any subscriber within the city of New Haven, shall not call for his tracts within ten days after notice of their being published shall have been given in some news-paper, his share shall be considered as relinquished to the disposal of the Society.

9. If any subscriber without the city of New Haven shall not call in like manner within three months after such notice, his share shall be considered as relinquished as before mentioned.

10. No member shall be entitled to any tracts till after the payment of his annual, or other subscription.

11. The officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, to be chosen by ballot, and of committees.

12. There shall be an annual meeting on the last Wednesday of October, holden at New Haven, at which the officers shall be appointed, and any other business shall be done that may be thought proper.

13. The President, or in his absence, the Vice President may call a special meeting, and not less than seven shall at any time constitute a *quorum*; but a less number shall have power to adjourn.

14. A committee shall be chosen from the members throughout the State, whose duty it shall be to solicit subscriptions, to assist in the distribution of tracts, to be agents for the Society, in the collection and remittance of subscription monies, and to transact such other business, as the Society shall deem expedient.

15. A special Committee shall be appointed to select matter for publication, and to superintend the printing of the Tracts.

16. Every member shall be at liberty to withdraw from the Society, on giving written notice of his intention to the Secretary.

17. No tax shall be laid upon the Society.

18. The accounts of the Society shall be audited, and the proceedings of the Society published, annually.

19. The Constitution of the Society may be amended at any annual meeting.

After several meetings of a number of gentlemen friendly to a Religious Tract Society, the foregoing articles

were adopted, and all the gentlemen present at the last meeting subscribed in such a manner as to become members according to the Constitution. They then proceeded to the choice of officers to serve the Society till the first annual meeting. The following persons were chosen to the offices affixed to their respective names:

Rev. TIM. DWIGHT, D. D. *Pres.*

ISAAC MILLS, Esq. *Treasurer.*

JEREMIAH EVARTS, Esq. *Sec'y.*

The following persons were chosen a committee to solicit subscriptions in this city; viz. Isaac Mills, Esq. Stephen Twining, Esq. Rev. Samuel Merwin, Mr. Hezekiah Belden, and Jeremiah Evarts, Esq.

The choice of a Vice President and committees was deferred to a future meeting.

Published by direction of the Society.

JEREMIAH EVARTS, *Secretary.*
New Haven, Sept. 7, 1807.

It is expected that those who subscribe to pay annually will remit the amount of their first subscription to the Treasurer, at, or before, the annual meeting in October next, and that future annual payments will be remitted to the Treasurer, at the annual meetings when they shall become due. Those to whom subscription papers may be entrusted are desired to forward them to the Secretary, at, or before, the annual meeting in October next.

HANCOCK FEMALE TRACT SOCIETY.

For the gratification and encouragement of the friends of Zion, the following sketch is communicated.

In the county of Hancock, District of Maine, a small society has been in operation for three years past, denominated, *the Hancock Female Tract Society*; its object is to procure religious books and tracts to be distributed among the poor and destitute in the district; for this purpose each member contributes one cent a week. Its officers are a Directress, General Treasurer, and Secretary, and a committee of three, chosen from among the gentlemen of the Hancock Association. At each annual meeting of

the Society its officers decide what books to purchase, and how to distribute them. There is also in each town, where a number of subscribers reside, a Branch Treasurer to receive and forward money.

The sum which the Society has already realized, besides incidental expenses, amounts to \$107; which has been appropriated partly for the purchase of a few copies of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Husbandry spiritualized*, *Almost Christian*, *Grace and Truth*, *Glory of the Gospel*, *Devout Exercises*, &c. and several hundred tracts, such as, *Appeal to Christians*, *Earl of Rochester*, *Drop of Honey*, *Divinity of Christ*, *Short Sermons*, *Resignation*, *Life of Faith*, &c. and partly for reprinting Bunyan's *Heavenly Footman*. These books and

tracts are distributed in different directions by the Society's committee.
Sept. 22, 1807.

HOLLAND.

NINE answers to the following prize questions of the Amsterdam Society for the increase of religious knowledge have been received: "How comes it, that in our dark and sorrowful times, insensibility is so great, and a sufficient attention to the dispensations and judgments of God is so little observable? And what are the best means, and most applicable to counteract the spreading of that insensibility?" The answer of M. C. A. Vander Broeck, preacher at Oud Beizerland, has obtained the prize.

Literary Intelligence.

THE ECLECTIC REVIEW.

THIS excellent periodical work was commenced in January, 1805, and continues to be published monthly in London. It is supported by men distinguished for literature and talents, and the design and execution of it reflect the highest honour upon its conductors. To those, who wish for a general view of the literature of the world, or who are desirous of seeing the most important works, that issue from the press in England, carefully examined, and their value estimated by learned men, who respect the gospel of Jesus Christ, this review is highly interesting. We do not think there ever was a publication of the kind, that combined so many excellencies, or could be considered so valuable a treasure to those, who would wish to have literature subservient to Christianity. The editors do not undertake to review every thing, which is published; they *select* the most important works, and such as are worthy of notice. Amidst the multitude of books, which thicken around us, some guide is necessary to direct us in our choice of such as deserve to be read; and it is believed that the above mentioned review is the best guide that exists.

HUNGARY.

M. FRANCIS VON PUSPOSKY, canon of Grosswardein, in Hungary, by his last will appointed the sum of 24,000 florins to be applied to charitable uses. His executor has disposed of this legacy as follows; 5000 florins for the erection of a hospital for the sick at Grosswardein, for the use of all religions and classes, in the county of Bihar; the care of establishing this is undertaken by Mr. Sandorffi, an active physician in the county.

10000 florins for the support of village schools in the diocese of Grosswardein.

7000 florins for the increase of salaries to local ministers.

1000 florins for philosophical experiments in the royal academy at Grosswardein.

1000 florins for reward books to children, who answer best in the parish catechisms.

The number of students, who attended the Catholic Pædagogia in the five literary circles of Hungary, in the course of the year 1804, amounted to 11,832, out of which 4553 were pupils to the Piaristes; 1228 to the Benedictines, Cordeliers, and Minor-

ities; and 6047 were educated in those colleges where the instruction of youth is committed to the care of lay professors.

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NORWAY.

In 1803, Mr. Tank, a merchant of Bergen, bequeathed to that city 60,000 crowns, for the foundation and support of a primary school. In 1805, a glover of Odensee, named Kahn, bequeathed his own dwelling house and 50,000 crowns for the establishment of an asylum for orphans, and other destitute children. M. Glarcep, of Copenhagen, in the same year, left legacies for the relief of the poor, and for the support of the school masters of the little island of Gioel.

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SPAIN.

The admiralty is in possession of an immense collection of observations and ship's journals of the most interesting kind. It is only within a very short period that these treasures have been employed to advantage. In 1797, an idea was first entertained of erecting an office called the Hydriographic Archives, where all observations are collected, arranged, and numbered, for the purpose of projecting the best maps and charts from them. This capital institution, which properly commenced only in 1798, will soon become very extensive; as the directors are men of the greatest talents, zealous, and indefatigable. This is proved by the number of maps which have already been published in so short a time.

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SWITZERLAND.

On Tuesday, the 2d of September, the Knippenbuhl Rock, which formed the summit of Mount Kosenberg, in the canton of Schwitz, in Switzerland, was suddenly detached, and carried with it a great portion of the mountain. This tremendous body rolled down into the valley, which separates the lake of Zug from that of Lauwertz, and filled up about a fourth part of the latter lake; destroying four whole villages, and part of several others. Upwards of a thousand persons lost their lives; and only thirty remain alive out of the population of the whole district where this disaster

happened. General Plyffer predicted this calamity, 20 years since, from the knowledge which he had of the mountain.

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DENMARK.

A Danish Dictionary, on a plan similar to that of the *Dictionnaire de l'Academie Françoise*, which is intended to fix the orthography and form the standard of the language, has been for some time in the hands of the most distinguished literati of the country, and is now in some degree of forwardness. It is undertaken at the expense, and conducted under the direction, of the Royal Danish Society of Sciences.

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RUSSIA.

Capt. Krusenstern, in a long voyage of discovery undertaken by order of government, preserved the water sweet during the whole voyage, by charring the inside of the water casks.

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GREECE.

Two Greeks, the brothers Zoizima, are applying part of their fortune toward a new edition of the ancient Greek classics, from Homer down to the time of the Ptolemies, under the superintendence of their countryman Coray. This collection, which is to be printed by Didot, is intended for such of their countrymen, as wish to learn the ancient language of their forefathers; and will be delivered gratis in Greece to diligent scholars and active teachers.

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EAST INDIES.

The literary society of Bombay, of which Sir James Mackintosh is President, will shortly publish a volume of transactions.

The College at Fort William in Bengal, we are happy to observe, still subsists and flourishes. On the 3d of March last, the annual examination and public disputations took place, before the Governor General Sir George Barlow. The disputations were in Persian, and the declamations in Mahrattah, Hindoostanee, and Arabic.

After the distribution of the prizes, the Governor General delivered a speech of considerable length. It ap-

pears from the speech, that various literary works have been published under the auspices of the college during the last year; of these the principal is an elementary analysis of the laws and regulations for the government of British India, by J. H. Harrington, Esq. one of the judges, and professor of that branch of science. There are likewise in the press, a Hindoostanee Dictionary; a general history of the Hindoos, and a review of the manners and customs of the Hindoos, the two last by learned na-

tives attached to the college. It also appears that Mr. W. Lumsden is engaged in a new Grammar of the Persian language; and that Mr. Carey and the other Baptist Missionaries have undertaken the translation, under the patronage of the Asiatic Society, of some of the most ancient and authentic works of literature in the Shanscrit. A descriptive catalogue of the books found in Tippoo Sultaun's library, has been completed by Captain Charles Stewart, and will be published in England.

INSTALLATION.

INSTALLED, August 12th, 1807, over the Congregational church and society in Bristol (Me.) Rev. Jonathan Belden. Rev. Asa Lyman of Bath offered the introductory prayer. Rev. David Thurston of Winthrop preached the sermon, from Philippians ii. 29. "Receive him therefore in the

Lord with all gladness." Rev. Jonathan Ward of New-Milford offered the installing prayer. Rev. Eliphalet Gillet of Hallowell delivered the charge. Rev. Kiah Bayley of New Castle presented the right hand of fellowship, and Rev. Mr. Gillet offered the concluding prayer.

Poetry.

SONNET ON SABBATH MORN.

WITH silent awe I hail the sacred morn,
That scarcely wakes while all the fields are still!
A soothing calm on every breeze is borne;
A graver murmur gurgles from the rill,
And echo answers softer from the hill,
And softer sings the linnet from the thorn;
The sky-lark warbles in a tuneless shrill.
Hail, light serene! hail, sacred Sabbath morn!
The rooks sail lightly by in airy drove:
The sky a placid yellow lustre throws:
The gales that lately sigh'd along the grove
Have hush'd their downy wings in dead repose.
The hov'ring rack of clouds forgets to move,
So soft the day when the first morn arose.

Ch. Ob.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Another number of *Pastor*; Answer to *Inquirer*, relative to General Association, with several other communications from Correspondents; Also a review of Mr. Webster's Philosophical Grammar, with a body of very interesting intelligence just received from England, shall enrich our next number.—We omit our list of New Publications, Obituary, &c. to give room for the account of the New Institution of the Tract Society in Connecticut.

Thoughts on 1 Cor. xv. 19. by T; Sketch of Rev. Oliver Heywood, and remarks on the plan of a *General Association*, have just come to hand, and shall be duly noticed.